

CHAPTER 16

Proverbs 16:1 *The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.*

Men think and speak freely, without external compulsion. But our sovereign LORD rules both for His own glory and purposes.

Man Proposes God Disposes

No man can or will think and speak wisely without the grace of God.

No man's thoughts or speech surprise the all-disposing will of our LORD.

A man should humble himself before God. Put his trust in Him, call upon Him, obey Him, and thank Him for any preparation in his heart toward Him!

No man has ever made a choice in his heart or uttered a word with his lips that was not used altogether by God for His glory.

Man thinks and speaks freely, for he feels no pressure but his own desires and motives; but God nevertheless controls every part of the process and uses both the thoughts and the words to accomplish His own glory and purpose.

If there is any evil that will not praise Him, He limits it. God uses all evil to accomplish His own praise, regardless of what man thinks (*Psalms 76:10; Isaiah 10:5-15*).

The LORD does not put evil in a man's heart, for there is plenty there already. Scripture is very plain that God does not tempt any man by putting evil in his heart (*James 1:13-16*).

But Scripture is just as plain that God uses the evil that is there for His own designs. In fact, **If** God were not often restraining the evil hearts of men, the world would be far worse.

Of course, this doctrine of God's sovereign government of the world is no longer taught, though it was an axiom in prior generations.

Most of mankind have rejected God, and those allowing for God do not want Him, ruling in their good and evil actions, and determining their purpose in life and eternity. They must have free will and free determination of their own eternal destiny, or they will reject the doctrine God.

God will never breach a man's will ^{volition}. God does not have to readjust His plans to accommodate your will. God knows everything. Every thought and every intention of a man!

Let us consider the heart. Men think it is their own sacred possession that God cannot touch, but the Bible tells us differently. Solomon, a king himself, wrote, "*The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will!*" (*Proverbs 21:1*). See the comments on *Proverbs 21:1*.

God governs the evil hearts of man for His will:

Joseph's brothers (*Genesis 45:8; 50:20*).

Pharaoh (*Exodus 4:21; 14:4*).

Sihon (*Deuteronomy 2:30*).

The Canaanites (*Joshua 11:19-20*).

Eli's sons (*1Samuel 2:25*).

Hadad (*1Kings 11:14*).

Rehoboam (*1Kings 12:15*).

Ahab's prophets (*1Kings 22:22*).

The kings of Assyria (*1Chronicles 5:26*).

The Philistines and Arabians (*2Chronicles 21:16*).

Amaziah (*2Chronicles 25:20*).

Israel (*Isaiah 63:17*).

The Satan's dupes (*2Thessalonians 2:11-12*).

The kings of Europe (*Revelation 17:17*).

God can and will judge men for evil thoughts and deeds He used for His own glory.

As an example, the Assyrians (*Isaiah 10:5-15*).

Another example, the crucifixion of Christ (*Acts 2:23; 4:28*).

Since, they chose their sinful deeds willingly, so God is still righteous in judging them (*Romans 9:18-20*).

God can restrain any man's heart from doing evil, when He chooses to do so. He withheld King Abimelech from touching Sarah, whom he had taken from Abraham for his wife (*Genesis 20:6*).

God similarly withheld the Canaanites from desiring the land of Israel, when all the men went up three times a year for the feasts (*Exodus 34:24*).

Why does He not restrain all sin like this? Because He is using man's wrath to His own praise (*Psalms 76:10*)!

God prepared good in the hearts of Israel: (*1Chronicles 29:18*).

Cyrus (*Ezra 1:1*).

Darius (*Ezra 6:22; 7:27*).

Nehemiah (*Nehemiah 2:12; 7:5*).

The Psalmist (*Psalms 119:36*).

Zerubbabel and the remnant (*Haggai 1:14*).

Lydia (*Acts 16:14*).

Titus (*2Corinthians 8:16*).

The Elect (*John 6:45; Hebrews 8:10; 10:16*).

If you desire to serve Him at all, He prepared that in you, as well (*1Corinthians 12:3*)!

Let us consider the tongue. Men think their lips and tongues are their own, but that is not what the Lord declares (*Psalms 12:4*)!

Even Balaam's dumb Ass answered from the LORD (*Numbers 22:28-30; 2Peter 2:16*)!

Shimei did curse, but it too was from the Lord (*2Samuel 16:10*).

Balaam himself tried to curse, but the Lord brought forth a blessing (*Numbers 23:11-12*)!

When Caiaphas thought he was conspiring, he was prophesying (*John 11:49-51*)!

And Peter's blessed answer was straight from heaven (*Matthew 16:17*)!

Our Lord's apostles could speak gloriously without preparation, in numerous foreign languages they had never learned (*Luke 21:12-15; Acts 6:10; Acts 2:1-13*).

There is no evil that should frighten or perplex you, for it is all under the governing control of the LORD.

Every good and noble thought you have toward heaven, you should give thanks, for God has prepared your heart toward Him (*1Chronicles 29:9, 14, 18*)!

No man has ever called on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, without God first creating the desire in his heart.

Without His quickening grace, you would still hate Jesus Christ with your dying breath (*Psalms 14:1-3; Isaiah 26:10; Luke 16:27-31; John 1:12-13; 3:3, 8; 5:24-29; 6:44-45, 65; 8:43, 47; 10:26-29; Romans 3:9-18; 1Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; Philippians 2:13; 1John 4:15; 5:1*).

Shall we slothfully wait for Him to work in us? God forbid! Such is the wicked excuse of the predestinationist! We are to work out the salvation He has worked in us (*Philippians 2:12*).

We should keep our hearts as firmly as we can and labor as diligently as we can (*Jude 1:21; 2Timothy 2:1-4*).

The sanctified wisdom, taught by our Proverb, quickly gives all the credit and praise to His grace (*1Corinthians 15:10*)!

Reader, humble yourself before God today. Let Him be your fear! Trust Him. Obey Him. Give thanks for any knowledge or desire you have toward Him or heaven.

Proverbs 16:2 All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

Reader, do you know yourself? How can you? Your own heart lies to you better and more than anyone! "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (*Jeremiah 17:9*).

No man truly knows himself! You do not know yourself! David said, "Who can understand his [own] errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults" (*Psalms 19:12*).

Of course you are different, you think you are clean and right in all your ways! Your self-righteous heart justifies everything you think, say, and do!

Your lying heart leads you to all sorts of folly and sin, and you hardly even know it (*Proverbs 16:25; 30:12*)!

But the LORD weighs your secret ambitions and motives, on His righteous scales; just as He weighed Belshazzar! And He will also find you just as wanting! Then He will purify you in the fiery furnace of affliction. See the comments on *Proverbs 17:3*.

Though you cannot know the deceitfulness of your heart, the LORD does. God says to man, "Who can know it?" Then He answers, "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (*Jeremiah 17:10*).

All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of God, including the thoughts and intents of your heart (*Hebrews 4:12-13*).

You are being weighed right now! The scales of holy justice are tipping! Examine yourself! Reader, why are you reading this commentary? How are you reading it? Have you already decided it has nothing for you? Do you think you know your spirit? Is this warning for other sinners, those far worse than you?

Do you resent spiritual warnings? Are you thankful to God you are not as wicked as other men? Are you too busy for this spiritual stuff? Are you irritated there is not something new and exciting to tickle your ears?

You deceive yourself! Confess your depravity! Repent of your arrogant self-righteousness! True humility is to fall humbly and helpless before God and confess sincerely, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (*Luke 18:13*).

So important is this Proverb, the Holy Spirit gave it to us twice. See the comments on *Proverbs 21:2*.

It is easy to slide through spiritual instruction, to speed read or listen lazily to satisfy a deceitful conscience.

It is easy to apply warnings to others, to identify notes at great distances, while missing your own beam.

It is easy to despise others, to thank God you are not as disgusting as they are, while your spirit is weighed in heaven as worst of all!

There Is Nothing Worse! Than Self-Righteousness!

What Is Self-Righteousness? Thinking you are righteous and justifying yourself against conscience, correction, and conversion.

Such a person has no clue they are full of sin, for they have allowed lofty thoughts of themselves to totally distort their judgment.

Such a person only uses the mirror of God's Word for others, for they don't even see a need for examining their own faces (*James 1:21-25*).

How will you reason with such a person? You cannot point out their sin, for they cannot see it. Their arrogant self-confidence rejects your reasons (*Proverbs 26:12, 16; Galatians 6:3*).

These scornful ones will hate you for the effort (*Proverbs 9:7-8*).

They are the same that crucified the Lord of glory for exposing their false and hypocritical religion.

Every Man Is A Pharisee In His Own Spirit!

What Is Self-Righteousness? Is confidence you are good, competent, intelligent, and capable. It is difficulty in saying you are wrong, foolish, stupid, proud, or rebellious.

Self-Righteousness enjoys finding or discussing the faults of others. It presumes to accuse others, when having its own sins.

Self-Righteousness always has opinions about others' without Scripture. It is the defensiveness of resisting and balking at correction. It makes judgments and opinions against authority.

Self-Righteousness is the ease you apply a sermon to most anyone else. It is the thought during a sermon that you don't really need change in that area.

Self-Righteousness is the response that you are comfortable with things as they are. It is the lack of thankfulness for correction. It may cry defensively when reproved or warned about sin.

Self-Righteousness responds, "I am just a failure," when criticized. It is the excuse, "I am not that bad, you just misunderstand me."

Self-Righteousness remembers the sins of others when it is being corrected. It scornfully mentions the sins of the one correcting it.

What can you do? Humble yourself and admit you are at least as wicked in all your ways as the worst sinner you know (*1Timothy 1:15*).

Confess your self-righteousness as a putrid stench in the nostrils of a Holy God (*Luke 18:9-14*).

Admit your righteousness's are as rags (*Isaiah 64:6*).

Beg the LORD to search and reveal your wicked thoughts to you (*Job 34:32; Psalms 26:2; 139:23-24*).

Ask for a clean heart (*Psalms 51:10*).

Prove your clean spirit by letting God's Word correct and teach you (*Isaiah 66:2*).

Receive correction without rebelling (*Psalms 73:21-22*).

God never despises a broken and contrite heart (*Psalms 34:18; 51:17; Isaiah 57:15*).

Get into humble contrition, He will lift you up (*James 4:10; 1Peter 5:6*).

Blessed are the poor in spirit (*Matthew 5:3*).

You cannot defer or minimize self-examination. It is the holy exercise of spiritual men, who rightly understand the deceitful wickedness of their own hearts (*1Corinthians 11:28; 2Corinthians 13:5*).

Every secret thing will soon be exposed before the Lord Jesus Christ. Cleanse your hands and purify your hearts from double-minded hypocrisy through critical and sober repentance (*James 4:8-10*). The Lord will lift you up!

Wise men will recognize the defilements within a man's heart (*Mark 7:20-23*).

These defilements within the heart are more deceitful and dangerous to pleasing God than the exposed evil without. While hatred of this world is a good and godly attitude toward the dangerous temptations there, it is the deceitful lusts in your own heart that are your greatest enemy.

Constant vigilance with sincere humility before God will save your spirit. Remember King Saul, King Belshazzar, and others in the balances of God's justice.

Proverbs 16:3 Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

I don't know what to do! I'm so confused! I feel overwhelmed! Such miserable doubts are the cost of losing your peace with God.

Peace can be easily recovered, **If** you commit your works to Him. He will settle, comfort, and strengthen you (**1Peter 5:10**).

Peace can be easily recovered, **If** you love His Word **Psalm 119:165** *Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.*

Reader, there are four areas that God's Word tells us to commit to Him:

1. **Commit your cause** (accomplishments with God's help), **Job 5:8** *I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause:*
2. **Commit your spirit** (relationship), **Psalm 31:5** *Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.*
3. **Commit your way** (direction we choose), **Psalm 37:5** *Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.*
4. **Commit your works** (our stewardship efforts), **Proverbs 16:3**

In a sinful and uncertain world, where you cannot know tomorrow, there are often many doubts, fears, perplexities, and worries. This is not the life God desires or planned for His children. He can and will take painful cares of this life away, **If** you commit all to Him.

God promised His permanent presence brings both contentment and courage (**Hebrews 13:5-6**).

Peter wrote about the LORD's tender care, *"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you"* (**1Peter 5:7**).

David, who faced many burdens and very severe difficulties, wrote with confidence and experience, *"Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved"* (**Psalm 55:2**). Believe both promises!

Paul wrote, *"Be careful for nothing ... and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"* (**Philippians 4:6-7**).

Jesus comforted, *"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself"* (**Matthew 6:34**).

This great comfort is based on God's ability and care. All you need to do to obtain it, is trust Him and seek His kingdom first (**Matthew 6:25-33**).

You commit your works unto the LORD by doing everything His way. You esteem His precepts to be perfect and sufficient (**Proverbs 3:7; Psalm 119:128**).

If you totally leave your own understanding, and in all your ways acknowledge Him, He will direct your paths (**Proverbs 3:5-6**).

Joshua found the first walled city in Canaan to be easy, doing it the LORD's way (**Joshua 6:20**)!

Are you overwhelmed as a parent? Perfect knowledge is right here in the book of Proverbs.

You commit your works unto the LORD by doing them unto Him. *"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"* (**1Corinthians 10:31**).

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (**Colossians 3:17**).

Everything works out for those loving God, for they are the ones appointed to glory, according to His eternal purpose (**Romans 8:28**)!

You commit your works unto the LORD by turning all issues over to Him. You do this by prayer with thanksgiving (**Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2**).

If you keep your mind fixed on the LORD, rather than your dilemmas, you will find perfect peace (**Isaiah 26:3-4**).

When facing a great army, Jehoshaphat led a public prayer meeting, where he prayed, among other things, *"Neither know we what to do"* (**2Chronicles 20:1-19**).

God fought the battle for Him! The Lord Jesus said, *"Let not your heart be troubled ... believe also in me"* (**John 14:1**).

You commit your works unto the LORD by trusting Him for the results. It is vain and distressing when you think the results depend on you. The results depend on the LORD, and He suggests you trust Him (**Psalm 127:1-2**)!

Once you have made reasonable plans, turn the rest over to His sovereign will (**Proverbs 16:9; Psalm 37:3-7; James 4:13-15**).

Such trust will fix and establish your heart without fear, regardless of your situation (**Psalm 112:7-8**).

Surrounded with enemies on all sides, Joab committed an important battle to the LORD, and had a great victory (*2Samuel 10:9-14*).

Two widows, uncertain of their future, sent one to glean, with both trusting in their great Father in heaven: she not only obtained much free food, but also a rich husband (*Ruth 2:1-23*)!

Paul knew, the truth of this Proverb, as well as any. He faced more difficulties at any one time than you could even imagine in a lifetime. But he said, "*We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed*" (*2Corinthians 4:8-9*). He had committed his works to the LORD.

What troubles you today? What faces you that distresses your mind? Commit your works unto the LORD, and He will establish your thoughts. Handle things His way; do them for His glory; turn everything over to Him in prayer; and trust Him for the results. He will take care of you immediately, by blessing you with contentment, peace, and assurance.

Our Lord faced the ultimate challenge and difficulty in the horrifying work of our redemption on the cross of Calvary, but He committed Himself to the LORD (*1Peter 2:23*).

Our Lord was heard, and an angel came and strengthened Him (*Hebrew 5:7-10; Luke 22:43*).

We should also, do well in obedience, commit the keeping of your soul to your faithful LORD (*1Peter 4:19*).

The same servants of God the Father will minister unto us (*Psalms 34:7; Hebrews 1:13-14*).

Proverbs 16:4 The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

Give God the glory! Here are the final and true answers to four of life's greatest questions:

1. What is the origin of things?
2. Why do they exist?
3. Who is the true God?
4. Why does evil exist?

Reader, this single sentence from the Holy Spirit is worth the weight of your house in gold! Humble yourself and learn wisdom!

Proverbs is of little value, if you stumble here. This verse should be one of the first children memorize. The beginning of wisdom depends on grasping this Proverb (*Proverbs 1:7; 9:10*).

Here is the Bible worldview. From this foundation of knowledge, we can reason safely and sanely about other matters of life.

If you neglect or reject the truth here, your life will be a nightmare of confusion, and then you will at some point meet God (*Psalms 7:11; Amos 4:12*).

What is the origin of things? God made all things. Evolution is a lie, told by God-haters, to discredit the Bible. The Bible is plain: "*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*" (*Genesis 1:1*).

This is more certain than any fact you will ever hear. **If** you do not have the faith to believe it, you are unreasonably stupid (*2Thessalonians 3:2; 1Timothy 6:20-21*).

It is a sign of insanity to begin your reasoning about the universe from a big bang of chaotic matter. Where did the matter come from? How did an explosion bring order out of chaos?

Jesus Christ, the God, that made all things. The Bible is plain: "*All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made*" (*John 1:3*).

We do not argue creation versus evolution with unbelievers; for unless they have the gift of faith, they cannot learn anything, especially if they are educated.

An arrogant man that has been flattered with education is worse than a fool (*Proverbs 26:12; 1Corinthians 1:19-20; 3:19-20; 1Timothy 6:3-5*).

The only big bang this universe ever felt was the shocking force of God's Words, "*Let there be light!*" And there was light! Even without a sun, moon, or stars for three days! He made all things, and He made all things out of nothing!

By faith we not only know this fact, we understand it as well (*Hebrews 11:3*).

Man is nothing more than a vessel of the divine Potter. Reader, grasp this first answer thoroughly, and you are on your way to wisdom.

Consider what makes a person. Parents, height, nationality, intelligence, looks, time of birth, strength, race, coordination, personality, and opportunities make a person. God chose every one of these for you, without consulting you at all.

God did not ask you a single question about your preferences. He chose them Himself! God gave you existence, a very personal thing, and the pain and trouble it brings, without asking you! You cannot even end your existence! You will eventually have to deal with Him! He is God!

While you are fearfully and wonderfully made, so are all His creatures (*Psalm 139:14*)!

Lift your eyes and bless and extol the most High. God is special, and you owe Him all that you are and have! Reject the folly of self-esteem (*2Timothy 3:1-2*).

Read Nebuchadnezzar's personal testimony (*Daniel 4:1-37*)!

If a person does not believe God made all things, there is no reason discussing anything of any importance with him. He has chosen a worldview of insanity, reasoning in a circle from his own imagination.

He has the same answer for all questions, "I think so." He cannot know anything for certain, for his foundation rests on the thin air of speculative hallucinations that he calls theories.

Why do things exist? Why is the universe here? Why is man here? Why are you here?

God made all things, and He made them for Himself! Give Him glory! These answers are so true! *"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen"* (*Romans 11:36*).

God is the First Cause of all things, and He is the Final End of all things. All things were created by Him and for Him (*Colossians 1:16*).

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (*Revelation 4:11*).

You will soon bow to this Blessed and Only Potentate (*Philippians 2:9-11; 1Timothy 6:13-16*)!

The universe exists because God wanted to make something for Himself! He did not make the world for man; He made the world and man for Himself!

Reader, you do not exist for yourself, nor does anything else exist for you; you and all things exist for God's pleasure. It is time to humble yourself and see the purpose of your existence, the glory of God!

If you rebel against this fact, or even neglect it, you will pay, now and later!

Why do elephants have long noses? For you to praise God for His creativity! Why do giraffes have long necks? For the same reason!

Why can a blue sky with white clouds and a warm sun make your heart sing? For the glory of God! Why do baboons not pull their hairy pants all the way up? For you to laugh with God! Do you know the best value of a zoo? It is for family worship, to praise God and ridicule Charles Darwin and Carl Sagan!

Why are ostriches stupid? For you to know God made dumb things (*Job 39:13-18*)!

Why are horses wonderful? For God to brag about them (*Job 39:19-25*)!

Why does a woman's body have curves that take a man's breath away? For the praise of His work, with a rib! (*Song of Solomon 4:1-7; 7:1-9*)

Why are there rainbows? To remind you God keeps His promises (*Genesis 12:9-17*)!

If you are short, fat, ugly, and stupid, God made you that way for Himself! You know He didn't make you that way for you! You wish you were tall, thin, attractive, and smart! He made the baboon for Himself, and He made you for Himself!

Horrible parents, few opportunities in life, and poor health are also His choices. It is a key to happiness to learn and accept this knowledge.

Whatever you have, and whatever you do not have, are both by God's choice for His own glory. Thank Him! Worship Him!

Even Satan was made for the glory of God! God allowed him to exercise his volition, as part of His eternal purpose. God allowed him to rebel in his pride; so He could display His sovereign will in wrath and power in Satan's eternal punishment.

God was not surprised by his rebellion. Satan and his angels shall be cast into everlasting fire, prepared for them from the foundation of the world (*Matthew 25:41*).

The smoke of his torment and that of his followers will ascend up forever (*Revelation 14:10-11*)!

Pharaoh was conceived easily, survived childbirth, and avoided the diseases that took the lives of many Egyptian children. He graduated at the top of his class, won several victories leading the army, and was chosen from numerous siblings to be ruler of Egypt. While king, the nation prospered and became powerful. He was a success at everything he tried. His glory and power increased. He became the greatest monarch on earth. Why?

Where did Pharaoh come from? What was the source of his unique ambition, personality, dreams, and successes? God made him, and God promoted him to the top of Egyptian power by arranging the events of his life. Why did God do this? To show that Pharaoh's false belief system and his false gods were foolish choices of his life and the True God would demonstrate His power and get the glory (*Exodus 9:16; Romans 9:17*)!

God did not make Pharaoh wicked. But God did know his heart and no matter what God proved to him, he

would harden himself to the bitter end. And God's glory would be magnified. **If** you do not know and understand these things, you do not know the God of the Bible.

Who is the true God? The LORD is His name! What does LORD mean? It is the English designation for the sacred Hebrew tetragrammaton, JHVH, which stands for I AM THAT I AM, which we pronounce as Jehovah!

Allah is merely the moon god of hallucinating Arabians; and Vishnu, Brahma, and Shiva are merely three of the Hindu imagined deities.

The LORD Jehovah is the true God. He is the only God. He alone is God.

The LORD created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is in six days.

The LORD is independent of all His creatures. He is infinite by any measure. He is eternal, immortal, invisible, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent.

Why does evil exist? Evil exists because: God gave Lucifer a free will. Rather than be content with his office as the anointed cherub of God, he swelled up in pride and purposed to be like the most high (*Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:13-15*).

God gave him privilege and freedom, and he used it to rebel against his Creator. God was not surprised or disappointed; Satan is responsible for his wicked deed. God is righteous in tormenting him forever for his sin.

Where does suffering come from? Satan brought his rebellion to earth. He lied to our first parents, and Adam chose his foolish wife over God. Jehovah had made man very good in a perfect world, but man corrupted the earth by sinning against His Maker (*Genesis 1:31; 3:16-19; Ecclesiastes 7:29*).

Adam chose the curse of sin for his family over Paradise with God. The whole creation groans in pain, travail, and death due to man's sin (*Romans 5:12-14; 8:22*).

Evolutionists cannot explain death. It should have evolved away long ago, since it is the most dreaded and hated thing in life! **If** a slimy salamander can choose to be a bald eagle, then surely man could have chosen to evolve death away!

Death is the wages of sin! And the Bible teaches us this fact clearly, which no evolutionist will ever find in a test tube! God created death, in several forms, as just punishment for sin. Therefore, all men die.

Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden did not surprise or confuse the LORD. Adam freely chose Eve over God. Adam alone is responsible for his sin and the

consequences. God made him perfect, warned him, and gave him only one commandment to keep.

Depraved children of Adam, with hearts in all-out rebellion against God and morality, commit atrocities daily. You hear and read about them.

They, nor their atrocities, surprise or confuse the LORD. He restrains their wickedness, so all they can do is what He will use for Himself (*Psalms 76:10*).

They never think about God at all, they only want to satisfy themselves (*Psalms 10:4; James 1:13-16*).

God is perfectly holy and good. Man chooses sin willfully against the light of nature and warnings from God and good men.

God never puts sinful lusts in men, for He does not need to.

God controls and directs all wickedness in the universe to His own praise and glory. Even the devil must obtain permission to touch a man or pig (*Job 1:12; 2:6; Matthew 8:31*).

God can keep a king from touching a woman, and He can use the offspring of incest for His glory (*Genesis 20:6; Genesis 38:1-30*).

God used the envy of Joseph's brothers to get him to Egypt (*Genesis 45:5; 50:20*).

God used Roman cruelty to crucify His Son on a tree (*John 18:31-32*).

His power was magnified to man about 1656 years after creation. Then He drowned the earth with a flood for man's wickedness. God controls and directs the sins of men and their punishment to magnify Himself.

King Sennacherib wanted to expand the Assyrian Empire and conquer neighboring nations; God used his wicked intentions to chasten His rebellious people, and then He destroyed him for his wickedness (*Isaiah 10:5-19*).

God allowed Jewish hatred for Jesus to bruise His only begotten Son for the sins of the world, and then He miserably destroyed them by the Romans just 40 years later for that horrible crime. It was wicked hands that crucified Him, but it was all according to His eternal purpose (*Acts 2:23; 4:27-28*).

What should you do? *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil"* (*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*).

Hear Solomon's father, "*Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah*" (**Psalm 4:4**).

And, "*Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth*" (**Psalm 46:10**).

Reader, do you know you are wicked? **2 Peter 3:9** *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

There is one escape from the Day of Evil, Salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ. God sent His Son to save His people from their sins (**Matthew 1:21**).

Our Lord, will not lose one of them (**Proverbs 6:39; 17:2**).

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Proverbs 16:5 *Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.*

Reader, do you think you are special? Then repent now before you get hurt! The LORD cannot stand anyone thinking highly of himself in his heart. It does not matter how important you might be, or how many friends you might have, you will certainly be punished; the LORD Himself will make sure of it. Humble yourself!

You are actually nothing (**Psalm 39:5, 11**).

You are truly less than nothing (**Psalm 62:9; Isaiah 40:17**).

You arrived ignorant in this world and helpless, dirtying yourself; and you will leave the same way.

You may be very successful, you might leave behind a small estate or a significant estate, that will be spent in a few months. The day of your death will be forgotten in weeks, and your grave will be lost.

You are so fragile and weak that a clothespin on your nose can end your earthly existence (**Isaiah 2:22**).

However, you are a living soul, that dwells in a house of clay; the foundation of your body is mere dust; and you can be killed as easily as a moth (**Job 4:19**).

God abhors and loathes the pride of men (**Psalm 113:5-6**).

God is extremely disgusted and intensely averse to their arrogance and pompous opinions. He hates their proud thoughts and looks (**Proverbs 6:16-19; 15:9**).

God will bring proud men low and abase them in this world and the next (**Job 40:9-14; Dan 4:37**).

The Words "*Proud In Heart*" Is Specific Sin God Hates!

Pride is a high opinion of yourself, leading to an attitude of superiority over others and contempt for others.

Pride is inordinate self-esteem. Boasting is not the point here. You may keep your pride to yourself. But God sees it, and He will judge it.

You must think soberly about yourself, lest you lie to yourself about your value (**Proverbs 16:18-19; Romans 12:3; Galatians 6:3; Philippians 2:3-4; 2Timothy 3:1-5**).

Consider Pride A Horrible Sin! You can avoid things that cause lust of the eyes (**Psalm 101:3**).

You can reject opportunities for the lust of the flesh (**Romans 13:14**).

But what about pride? It whispers to your heart every minute of every day and night! In bed your thoughts can be arrogant and critical, comparing yourself to others. In every act and event of life, there is a constant temptation for pride to creep in.

The words, "*though hand join in hand*" describe agreement and association with others for safety. It does not matter if others flatter you, or are just as proud. It does not matter what steps you take for protection. It does not matter that you try to be righteous in other areas. You cannot cover for this sin!

The first sin in the universe was pride, Satan's pride (**1Timothy 3:6**). And he was punished for it.

How severely? The devil's great abilities could not save him at all. He and his angels are reserved for eternal torment in the Lake of Fire forever (**Matthew 25:41; 2Peter 2:4; Revelation 20:10**).

Are You Proud In Heart? Check It Out! Do you wish others treated you better? Why? It must be because you believe you are important. Do you worry about others admiring you?

Do you resist correction and instruction? Do you envy and resent blessings to others? Can you list any ways you are better than another? Do you gloat a little at their failures?

Does selfishness make serving others hard? Are you defensive to reproof and warnings?

Do you deserve more public recognition? Can you apologize easily, fully, and quickly?

Do you whine about unfair circumstances? Does your spouse have to apologize first? Can you remember others' past failures?

Do you like to argue about "principle"? You may think adultery, drunkenness, and smoking are horrible, but God hates your self-righteous pride!

**If You Persist In Pride You Are Done!
The Bible Is Certain Pride Brings Penalties!**

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18).

"Before destruction the heart of man is haughty" (Proverbs 18:12).

"Surely he scorneth the scorners" (Proverbs 3:34).

"Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased" (Luke 14:11).

"God resisteth the proud" (James 4:6).

If you have a problem with pride, God will certainly punish you. What can be done? Repent! Fear the Lord, and hate pride and arrogance (**Proverbs 8:13**)!

Also, *"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (James 4:10).*

And, *"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1Peter 5:6).*

Manasseh was likely the wickedest king in the history of Israel, but God freely forgave him, when he humbled himself greatly (**2Chronicles 33:1-13**).

And if he was the wickedest king, then Ahab was second; but God accepted his humility as well (**1Kings 21:25-29**).

What does God require? That you walk humbly with your God (**Micah 6:8**).

Want To Kill Pride? Confess your sins fully (**James 4:5-10**).

Get a vision of God and humble your heart before Him (**Psalm 4:4; Isaiah 57:15**).

Pray fervently and often (**1Kings 3:7; Psalm 131:2**).

Never commend yourself, not even indirectly (**Proverbs 27:2**).

Always admit what you, are is a gift from the Lord (**1Corinthians 4:7**).

Tell your faults, so others will know the real you (**Romans 7:8; James 5:16**).

Apologize quickly and admit guilt (**Matthew 5:23-24**).

Thank those who admonish and correct you (**Psalm 141:5**).

Make others and their things most important (**Philippians 2:3-4**).

Get humble and enjoy the uncomely (**Romans 12:16**).

Do not compare yourself with others (**2Corinthians 10:12**).

Learn true charity (**1Corinthians 13:4-7**).

Be a great servant (**Luke 22:24-27; 2Timothy 2:24-26**).

Still Want To Kill Pride?

Avoid the spotlight as much as possible (**Luke 14:7-12**).

Enjoy serving those who cannot repay (**Luke 14:12-14**).

Do your charity in secret (**Matthew 6:1-4**).

Rejoice at forgiving those who wrong you (**Matthew 18:21-22**).

The LORD will be pleased.

Proverbs 16:6 By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.

Reader, the purest way of living is when mercy and truth combine, to purify your life.

These two elements of godliness come together to make men perfect. The motivation to seek and practice both of them is the fear of the LORD, which compels us to forsake our sins.

**Each Successful Man Must Start
With The Fear Of The LORD!**

The fear of the Lord, is the very beginning of wisdom and knowledge (**Proverbs 1:7; 9:10; Job 28:28; Psalm 111:10**);

The fear of the Lord, is the foundation, for living a godly life (**Proverbs 15:16; 20:28; 23:17; 28:14**), and

The fear of the Lord is the whole duty of man (*Deuteronomy 10:12; Ecclesiastes 5:7; 8:12; 12:13-14; Micah 6:7-8*). See the comments on *Proverbs 14:27*.

The Fear Of The LORD Drives Us To Seek His Approval In Every Part Of Our Life!

The fear of the Lord drives us to hate and turn from all sin (*Proverbs 8:13; 14:16; Psalm 97:10; 101:3; Amos 5:15; 2Corinthians 7:1*).

The fear of the Lord drives us to learn godliness that will perfect us before Him (*Colossians 1:28; 4:12; Hebrews 13:21*).

Mercy And Truth Two Jewels Of Godliness!

Mercy is compassion, forgiveness, or kindness that we show to others, when they are in our debt and have no right or claim to either.

Truth, is perfect fidelity, to what is right, as revealed in the Word of God, and our pure dealings in true sincerity without deceit or pretence. Consider these jewels well.

Mercy and truth are unknown to Satan and wicked men. Satan is a liar and murderer from the beginning, which are opposites of truth and mercy (*John 8:44*).

Satan seduced Eve in Eden, he questioned and reversed what God had said and profaned God's motives: he lied against the truth.

Rather than show merciful kindness to Abel, who was righteous in his worship, the devil moved Cain to kill him for nothing but envy (*1John 3:12*).

The wicked fools and religious Pharisees lie by word and deed when it serves their purpose. The Pharisees will judge without mercy when someone is in their power. They lied to Pilate in their rage to crucify the Truth, and they had no mercy on a Man in Whom he found no fault.

They were hypocrites and murderers. They twisted Scripture to justify personal revenge, and they only showed mercy to their friends (*Matthew 5:38-48; Luke 6:27-36*).

They hide their own sins under whitewashed exteriors, but they want to expose all others. They would pull an ass out of a pit on the Sabbath day, but they condemned Jesus for healing a man on the Sabbath (*Luke 14:1-6*). They had no mercy!

They condemned the disciples for picking corn on the Sabbath, in spite of David, eating the shewbread (*Matthew 12:1-7*). They had no truth or mercy!

They refused to answer the Lord's legitimate question about, John the Baptist, due to their wicked rebellion (*Matthew 21:23-27*). They had no truth!

Mercy And Truth Appear To Be Opposites!

Mercy seeks to compromise judgment for the benefit of another. Truth demands that we do right at all times. But in a wise and good man, they meet together and modify each other, enough to create beautiful gems. They purge iniquity and sin from lives, for most sins are violations of one or the other. So, which is more important?

Wisdom requires you to assess circumstances. Purity is more important than peace, and we do not compromise truth for mercy (*James 3:17*).

Preaching contrary to Scripture is cursed (*Galatians 1:8-9*).

We must hate every false way (*Psalm 119:128*).

Justifying the wicked brings God's judgment (*Proverbs 17:15; 1Samuel 3:13; 1Corinthians 5:2*).

Mercy is more important than the letter of the law (*Matthew 12:7; Mark 2:27*), If it keeps the spirit of the law (*John 7:23-24*).

Minor personal offences demand mercy over judgment (*Proverbs 19:11; Matthew 5:7, 38-42; 6:15; 7:1-2; James 2:13*).

Bowels of mercies are part of Christian character, which force us to eliminate any fleshly revenge (*Colossians 3:12-14*).

A wise man will defend God's truth absolutely: he will understand when that truth allows for mercy.

A wise man will show mercy whenever he can. He will always deal truthfully with others, but he will show mercy toward those who do not deal truthfully with him.

When Scripture states that God's ways are not our ways, it refers to His great degree of mercy in forgiving (*Isaiah 55:6-9*).

It is important we understand the value of this oft-quoted passage, in its precious context. God forgives and pardons freely, unlike natural men. Reader, would you forgive and pardon others?

Reader, would you: balance great zeal for truth with cheerful use of mercy?

Reader, would you: preach the truth unvarnished to your enemies, then pray for their forgiveness as they stoned you, as did Stephen (*Acts 6:8 - 7:60*)?

Reader, would you: blast slothful servants, yet beg for mercy toward a repentant, runaway slave, as did Paul (*2Thessalonians 3:8-12; Philemon*)?

Reader, would you: have mercy and truth kiss together in your life? Are you vigilant for the truth, but sensitive to the needs of others around you?

Reader, would you: train your children in the right way, but show them mercy and pity when they fail and repent for foolishness?

Reader, would you: do your best in faithfully performing your job, but show mercy to the careless waitress who spills water in your lap?

Reader, would you: do you always pay your bills on time, yet show mercy to those who are tardy in paying you? Do you tell both friend and foe the truth no matter what, but pray for your enemies when they turn against you for it?

Mercy and truth are met together perfectly in the Lord Jesus Christ; righteousness and peace have kissed each other in Him (*Psalms 85:10*).

Our Lord forgave the soldiers dividing His garments and provided mercy for his mother while hanging on the cross (*Luke 23:34; John 19:26-27*).

Our Lord held firm speaking of truth on trial before a governor who did not understand it (*John 18:37*).

Our Lord could have crushed the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes with His infallible use of Truth, but He showed pity and forgave harlots seeking mercy.

Proverbs 16:7 When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

God can and will bless your most difficult relationships, **If** you live righteously and wisely.

Living a godly life includes treating others right, which generally brings the natural consequence of peace.

But the Proverb teaches more than that. The LORD will calm agitated enemies and protect you from violent ones for your obedience.

There is a dual blessing in living a wise life, you grow in favor with God and men (*Proverbs 3:3-4; Luke 2:52*)!

This is a general rule with exceptions. Jesus Christ always pleased God, yet the Jews unjustly hated Him and used the Romans to crucify Him. God's higher

purpose of bruising Jesus to save believers superseded this Proverb.

Saints are persecuted and martyrs executed for God's greater glory and the soul profit of both. But all other things being equal, the Proverb is true, righteousness will certainly bring peace and protection.

A man's ways please the LORD, when he lives by faith (*Hebrews 11:6*).

Living by faith has two fundamental axioms: God exists, and God rewards diligent obedience.

Pleasing the Lord, is applied to daily life, by zealously trusting and following the Word of God in every matter, which is living by God's commandments and the rules of wisdom (*Psalms 34:12-16; 111:10; Ecclesiastes 12:13*).

Our Greatest Danger Is God's Wrath Not Our Enemies' Anger!

Please the Lord to avoid both! An enemy is another party hating you. It might be as mild as a family member envying you. It might be as extreme as a psychopath intent on killing you.

Nations may have other nations as enemies. In every case and at all times, God controls the hearts of all men, including your enemies (*Proverbs 21:1*).

God can lose or restrain their wrath (*Joshua 11:20; Psalm 76:10*).

Even the devil had to beg God to touch Job (*Job 1:9-12*).

There are created beings that God made, far greater than man, at your service. So, put your trust in the Lord. (*Psalms 34:7; Hebrews 1:14*).

Consider some examples, of this truth, in the Word of God.

God changed Laban from a pursuing enemy to an agreeable father-in-law (*Genesis 31:22-55*);

God melted Esau's murderous heart for Jacob's trust in the Lord (*Genesis 27:41; 33:1-4*).

No nation desired the property of Israel, when the men worshipped God three times a year (*Exodus 34:23-24*).

God let Solomon have a great reign of peace, so he could pursue his philosophical studies (*1Kings 4:21-25; Ecclesiastes 1:12-18*).

Joseph had peace with his master, his jailor, and Pharaoh (*Proverbs 39:1-6, 19-23; 41:38-45*).

The Philistines learned to love David, when hiding from Saul (*1Samuel 21:10-15; 27:5-7; 29:1-11*).

Daniel prospered under both Babylonian and Persian kings (*Daniel 1:21; 6:28*).

Esther and Mordecai were promoted to the highest levels of Persia (*Esther 2:15-18; 10:1-3*).

The Romans allowed Paul a rental house and preaching liberty (*Acts 28:30-31*).

When God is for His people, who can possibly be against them (*Romans 8:31*)?

God promised Israel, their captors would treat the Jews well. Which was even further fulfilled, in the kind support of the Gospel, by other kings since the apostles (*Isaiah 49:23; Jeremiah 15:11*).

So reader, give God the glory for King James I of England in seeking and endorsing the Word of God in English. And be thankful for the IRS code of America that subsidizes, ministers of the Gospel!

The way for peace with enemies is by righteousness and wisdom, never by compromise of holiness or truth.

Godly living will please both God and men. Compromise will bring the wrath of God and the resulting anger of enemies. Reader, put your trust in Him this day, faithfully obey His Word, and fear no man (*2Timothy 4:16-18; Hebrews 13:6*).

Proverbs 16:8 Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.

Life Is A Series Of Choices Based On Priorities.

Therefore pray for Wisdom, Knowledge, Understanding, Discretion, Discernment and Instruction daily!

Right Priorities Lead To Right Choices Which Result In A Successful Life!

The Lord declared a value system for human priorities, and King Solomon confirmed it by the most extensive social experimentation in human history. (Solomon's life and his commentary *Ecclesiastes*).

Only a few great men (and women) will align their priorities with God's and make wise choices.

Only a few will ever amount to anything notable with God and good men.

So reader, what is the problem?

Why do so few live successful lives in the sight of God and men? Because the world's priorities are opposite God's priorities!

The world measures success by a college education, a successful career, a comfortable home, and a good retirement.

The Lord measures success by godliness with contentment (*1Timothy 6:6*).

How opposite are these goals? How poor are you willing to be in order to be righteous?

Solomon had more money and power than Bill Gates can imagine. He had 1,000 wives. The book of *Ecclesiastes* records his search for man's purpose in life.

Solomon concluded his investigation by writing that fearing God and keeping His commandments is man's whole duty (*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*).

He wrote the Proverb above, inspired by the Holy Spirit, because he found wealth to be empty and frustrating; and he knew that every man will give an account for his conduct on earth.

So therefore, reader, righteousness should be a higher priority than even great revenues! Pleasing God should be more important than making money.

If it is: you will make decisions to be right rather than to be rich.

You will use Sundays for the Lord. You will be perfectly honest.

You will avoid wicked men, no matter how successful they are.

You will give liberally to the Lord and the poor. You will save, avoid debt, and hate suretyship.

You will spend an extra hour in confession, meditation, prayer, and self-examination before an extra hour at work.

Consider Lot and Abraham. Lot chose the plains of Jordan for financial advantage, even though Sodom was there (*Genesis 13:10-13*).

Lot ended up losing everything and living in a cave in profane misery (*Genesis 19:30-38*).

Abraham took the poorer lands, but Abraham was the friend of God and the father of Israel.

Though both men were saved, Lot ruined and wasted his life; Abraham accepted less to be great with God. Who would you rather be reader?

Moses turned down the pleasures and riches of Egypt, in order to be with the people of God and seek the riches of Christ (*Hebrews 11:24-26*).

A young ruler turned away from the Son of God Himself, because he loved money too much (*Matthew 19:16-26*).

Moses is known by name to this day and revered as a great man, but the foolish ruler with the wrong priorities is a nameless example of how not to live. Who would you rather be?

If you fear God and value pleasing Him, then you would fervently choose being Abraham and Moses over Lot and a foolish rich man.

But there is more to the equation. Giving up your natural life for the Lord will bring spiritual blessings. And trying to save your natural life will bring spiritual loss (*Matthew 16:24-26*).

No man has ever given up revenue for the Lord that has not been rewarded here and in the world to come (*Mark 10:28-30*).

How is little with righteousness better than great revenues without right?

No amount of money can compensate for a guilty conscience.

No amount of money can compensate for God's chastening of your sinful ethics.

No amount of money can compensate for the loss of spiritual blessings.

No amount of money can buy your family back from a carnal and materialistic mind. No amount of money can deliver your soul from the deceitful nature of riches (*1Timothy 6:6-10*).

No Amount Of Money Can Save You In The Day Of Judgment!

Who would you rather be, the rich man that fared sumptuously every day, while wearing purple and fine linen, or the beggar Lazarus, who lay hungry at his gate and had his many sores licked by street dogs?

Here is the most extreme contrast of little and great revenues!

Surely reader you value your eternal destination with enough understanding to choose Lazarus. With faith, hope, joy, and peace by the Spirit, Lazarus was also happier in this world!

Vows of poverty by Rome's priests and nuns are not included here, for they are patently false: There are no priests or nuns in the New Testament, there are only

bishops, or pastors, and deacons (*1Timothy 3:1-13; Philippians 1:1*).

God has richly given us all things to enjoy (*1Timothy 6:17-19*).

Ministerial laborers are worthy of their hire (*1Timothy 5:17-18; 1Corinthians 9:3-11*).

There is nothing righteous, about the monastic hypocrisy of those following the devilish lies, of avoiding meat and forbidding marriage (*1Timothy 4:1-3; Colossians 2:18-23*).

Reader, you have already made choices today, and you will make more. So, consider carefully: What priorities dictate your choices and decisions?

Have you bought into the world's value system, or are you committed to Lord's value system, with your whole heart? The Proverb before you, is a certain law of wise priorities.

Make sure you are choosing and valuing righteousness over revenues, or you will end up in a similar situation to Lot or a foolish young rich man.

Proverbs 16:9 A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

Man is an intelligent creature: he has desires and can plan the means to achieve them. Non-rational creatures cannot do this; they only react by their instincts.

But the sovereign God manages the details of men's plans, so that we are dependent upon Him; for He blesses the good man with favorable details and turns the evil man's plans upside down.

Here is God's government of the human race. Man proposes, God disposes. Man freely devises, God powerfully directs.

Man volitionally Plans God Masterfully Dictates!

Man acts as he pleases; God is pleased by how He uses man's actions. He is the LORD!

Many wander and wonder through life, wishing they knew God's will for them. But His will is not a mystery, and much of the answer is in this Proverb.

Commit your works to the LORD, your thoughts will be established (*Proverbs 16:3; Psalm 37:4-5*);

Devise and plan a way to achieve your desired godly objectives (*Proverbs 16:1; 15:22; 20:18*);

Believe that He will take care of the details (*Psalms 37:23; 84:11*). Simple!

Reader, as an obedient Christian, these Words are for you: The LORD gave you a heart, to follow your affections for what you prefer.

The LORD gave you a mind, so think of how you want to get there. Once you commit it to the Lord and follow the rules of Scriptural wisdom, go for it! No matter what it is! Simply submit it to God's will (**James 4:13-15**)!

There is no "perfect" anything, so don't look for it. We live in a sinful world; everything is imperfect. God has not revealed perfect choices for us.

You cannot see even the future of the next five minutes. You will waste your life searching for perfection; and you will always be frustrated.

Most any job will do, **If** the Lord directs your steps! This is the same with marriage, house hunting, business deals, family size, and so forth and so on.

Ruth devised in her heart to glean fields, pick up after the reapers, the sorriest job ever (**Ruth 2:2**)!

But the LORD directed her steps to the field of Boaz, a rich, single man who married her, and they had David as their great-grandson (**Ruth 2:3; 4:17**).

The Jews were condemned! Esther devised in her heart, to have King Ahasuerus and Haman for lunch, though she feared even asking the King (**Esther 4:16-17**).

But the LORD turned his heart toward her; and after she told him of Haman's evil plans, the King found him begging for his life upon her bed, and that was that (**Esther 7:7-8**)!

Abraham devised a way to seek a wife for Isaac, and the servant met Rebekah directly.

Jacob devised a way to flee from Esau, and the Lord blessed him to become rich with a large family.

Joseph chose to be righteous, and the Lord directed his steps to Egypt's throne.

Jesse devised a way to send food to his sons in the army, by his youngest son David, not knowing that God was directing David's steps for a showdown with Goliath!

Reader, let us look at Esther in reverse. Haman devised a way in his heart to annihilate the Jews, and he manipulated King Ahasuerus into signing the decree (**Esther 3:1-15**).

But the Lord directed his steps to total humility and ruin by building a gallows, meeting the king at a time that resulted in honoring Mordecai, and falling on Esther's bed begging for his life (**Proverbs 5:1 - 7:10**)!

Consider Joseph in reverse. His brothers devised a way to get rid of "*the dreamer*," that tormented them by his divine revelations; but the Lord directed their steps to sell him into Egypt, where he saved them all from starvation (**Genesis 45:4-8; 50:19-21**).

The Jews devised in their hearts to rid themselves of Jesus of Nazareth, but our LORD turned their devices upside down. For His crucifixion was God's choice for the salvation of the very people that hated and hoped to ruin Him. Every step they took in this most heinous crime was according to God's eternal purpose (**Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:28; 15:18**).

When hearing of the devices of the wicked, do not be moved by them at all. They can bring nothing to pass that God has not already from eternity planned to overrule for His own glory, purposes, and people. See the comments on **Proverbs 19:21**.

When facing a decision and not knowing what to do, here is wisdom.

1. Submit your life and works to the LORD.
2. Choose that course that pleases you best within the limits of godly wisdom.
3. Trust the Lord for the details.
4. Do not seek or fret about the perfect choice, for you are not capable of making it.
5. Your Heavenly Father cares for you, and He can more than compensate for any "mistake" you make with an inferior choice.

Proverbs 16:10 A divine sentence is in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.

This Proverb is not an observation, for no king has come close to its declarations. All earthly kings have violated this Proverb.

This Proverb is not political theory, for no natural man can keep its proposals. And neither can it be limited to a prophecy of Christ.

Here is political duty! Here is what a king should aim to do, by God's help! And to this end, the true people of God will pray for their rulers (**Ezra 6:10; Jeremiah 29:7; 1 Timothy 2:1-3**).

There is an ellipsis ^{Omission or suppression} in this Proverb, which we are to understand, in order, to get the proper lesson from its Words.

The Proverb describes only wise and righteous kings, as if saying, "*A divine sentence is in the lips of the good king.*" The need for supplying the same ellipsis can be seen elsewhere (**Proverbs 18:22; Ecclesiastes 7:28**).

The other Proverbs about kings by Solomon, confirm this interpretation (*Proverbs 16:12-13; 20:8; 20:26, 28; 25:4-5; 29:4, 14*).

David and Solomon were two of the greatest kings ever, with glorious reputations at times in their lives (*2Samuel 14:17; 1Kings 3:28*).

Yet their lips did utter profane things, and they perverted judgment during their reigns (*2Samuel 11:14-17; 23:3-5; 1Kings 11:1-11*).

Solomon through the Holy Spirit, penned these inspired Proverbs, dealing with politics, for the instruction of his son, to be a faithful and wise ruler of Israel.

Wisdom depends on the fear of God (*Proverbs 1:7; 9:10; 15:33*).

Wisdom is instructed by the Word of God (*Psalms 19:7-11; 119:130*).

A wise king, trembling before God's Word, would have a divine sentence in his lips, for his judgments would reflect God's will (*Deuteronomy 29:29*).

Therefore, God gave orders for the kings of Israel to have the Scriptures always before them (*Deuteronomy 17:18-20*).

Civil rulers today would benefit from the same requirement! All authority is from God, who ordained five spheres of human rule.

This should be every ruler's highest goal to represent God in his judgments (*Romans 13:1-7; 1Corinthians 4:1-4; Ephesians 6:4; James 3:1*).

The only way this high standard can be obtained is by careful study and application of the Bible, which has the final answers for all dilemmas (*Proverbs 22:17-21; Psalms 119:128; Isaiah 8:20; 2Timothy 3:16-17*).

The man that puts his total trust in the Lord, God will give him this Proverb's wisdom (*Proverbs 3:5-6; 16:3; 1Samuel 10:9; 1Kings 3:5-14; Psalm 119:98-100; James 1:5*).

There is only one perfectly righteous king (*2Samuel 23:1-5; Psalms 45:6-7; 89:19-37*).

A divine sentence is in His lips, and He never transgresses in judgment. He rules the universe, and He is coming soon to judge the world.

He will decree: "*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*" (*Matthew 25:41*).

Kiss the Son, lest He be angry! (*Psalm 2:10-12*).

Proverbs 16:11 A just weight and balance are the LORD'S: all the weights of the bag are his work.

Should a Quarter Pounder weigh four ounces? Should a gallon of milk contain 128 fluid ounces? How about a gallon of gasoline?

Should the medication you receive at a hospital be 100%, or 99% pure? How about the settings and accuracy of the diagnostic equipment?

Should the survey pins of your property be accurate to centimeters, inches, feet, or yards?

Do you feel strongly about these questions? Who says that measurements are important? And who is going to do anything about it, if they are not?

More than \$5 trillion worth of economic transactions take place in our country each year based on measuring devices. Just a 1% error would be over \$50 billion, far greater than the annual budget of most nations.

A typical convenience store sells 100,000 gallons of gasoline a month. If the owner adjusts the pumps to 127 fluid ounces per gallon, which you could not detect even with measuring cups, he could pocket an extra \$1,000 per month. Who would know?

The LORD Does! God ordained just weights and measurements; He commands them; and He enforces them (*Leviticus 19:35-36; Deuteronomy 25:13-15; Ezekiel 45:10*).

One of Israel's sins before being destroyed as a nation was deceitful merchant practices with false balances and weights (*Hosea 12:7; Amos 8:5; Micah 6:11*).

God will judge those who alter them for gain; for that is an abomination to Him; but He delights in their right use (*Proverbs 11:1; 20:10, 23*).

Honesty And Accuracy In Economic Transactions Did Not Originate With Man They Are From The LORD!

A high compliance with this ordinance of God leads to economic prosperity, as it has in America. When was the last time you measured your Quarter Pounder, milk, gasoline, medication, or survey pins? Economic trade is allowed to move at full speed with full confidence: not because we are a smart nation, but because we follow His ordinance.

Before modern scales, sellers provided a balance and weights (buyers did not want to carry weights everywhere, and who would trust theirs anyway). The extra weights were kept in a bag. Stealing was done two ways: the balance and/or the weights were altered.

Our Proverb helps define the eighth commandment, *thou shalt not steal (Exodus 20:15)*.

For people cut corners in many ways to steal from others, and the LORD condemns them all in order to establish property rights, economic confidence, and professional integrity.

Though our nation has an Office of Weights and Measures, under the authority of the Commerce Department, which regularly inspects public measuring devices, there is still room to cheat by those who do not fear the Lord. We should be thankful for this governmental authority and its protection, but we must always apply this Proverb to ourselves.

Reader, do you steal on the job by purloining, pilfering or small thefts (*Titus 2:10*).

Do you coast through jobs, cut corners from job specs, stretch breaks, or pad the time card. Do you pace yourself and make jobs take longer than they should? Should a windshield be installed perfectly, or almost perfectly? Should a sandwich be made perfectly according to the company's precise menu specifications? Or is close good enough?

When buying things, the LORD condemns pointing out faults and then boasting to others you got a great deal. For you are using a false balance, to the seller the item was overpriced, and to your friends it was under priced. This is an offence to the Judge of all the earth. Men will even say, "I got a steal!" This is true, for they are truly thieves! (*Proverbs 20:14*).

Do you always pay a fair price? When you detect an error in a transaction, do you point it out, even if it costs you more? Do you return extra change from a transaction?

You will never get ahead being stingy or tight in your financial dealings. This is a mark of profane men and why the poor get poorer and the rich get richer (*Proverbs 11:24-26; 19:17; 28:8*).

How do you treat widows (*Exodus 22:22*)? Do you pay their asking prices? Would you pay her more, **If** she were below market? Would you give a child without a parent a better deal? Consider well, reader. The LORD is watching (*Deuteronomy 10:18; Psalm 68:5*).

How did God punish stealing? Restore the stolen amount seven times (*Proverbs 6:31*); and **If** you couldn't afford that, then you were sold into slavery (*Exodus 22:3*). Simple, proper, perfect!

How should a Christian conduct himself in this world? Always exceed the expectations of those trusting you, on both the selling and buying sides and in all other economic transactions and professional relationships. You will always come out ahead, for promotion comes from the Lord (*Psalm 75:6-7*).

You Will Grow In Favor With God And Men.

Honest, accurate, and liberal conduct gives a living testimony in the earth of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and will cause others to ask a reason of our hope (*1Peter 3:15*).

Proverbs 16:12 It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.

Fame, Fortune And Future Of A Civil Government Depend On Righteousness.

God ordained governmental authority over nations, and He gave inspired instructions about it through a wise and prosperous king (*Proverbs 1:1; Ecclesiastes 1:1, 12-18; Romans 13:1-7; 1Peter 2:13-17*).

Biblical political science gives rules for ideal government, one rule being that leaders must hate sin. The ruling power is confirmed and strengthened by righteousness. (*Proverbs 16:10*).

A king, or any ruler, must be righteous to be worthy of his office and able to discharge his duties rightly (*Exodus 18:21*).

The people of a nation will submit to and support a ruler that earns their respect by righteousness. And they will pay his taxes!

The people will despise and eventually revolt against a ruler that commits wickedness. Solomon warned his son of the virtuous character, that rulers must have, to preserve their authority and office.

The Proverb is not descriptive, for most civil rulers are not righteous. Solomon did not observe that most kings were virtuous. The Proverb is perceptive or normative; setting the ideal standard for a great government (*Proverbs 20:28; 25:5; 29:4, 14*).

Solomon did know that the legitimacy and duration of authority depended to a great degree on godly character.

A faithful and noble ruler, acting justly and wisely for the interests of his people, will be admired and loved.

A faithful/noble rulers throne, or his office and authority, will be secure due to the loyalty and respect his citizens have for him.

A righteous leader of any sort is a glorious thing. His subordinates will cheerfully obey his decisions, because they trust his integrity. A noble ruler will have God securing his throne.

God raises up rulers, and he puts them down (*Psalms 75:7; Daniel 2:21*).

Our God that sits above, has great concern and regard about the conduct of earthly rulers (*Ecclesiastes 5:8; James 3:1*).

God will bless a righteous ruler with wisdom and protection, He will overthrow a wicked ruler.

Solomon and Rehoboam violated this rule and lost much of their kingdom. Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines, lived extravagantly, and heavily taxed the nation.

When the people asked his son for relief, he consulted with foolish friends, which cost him ten of Israel's twelve tribes. His throne was not established, because he did not despise wickedness.

The Proverb Applies To All Authority!

A husband, father, employer, or pastor will keep the functional authority of his office as long as he is righteous.

Every leader should humble himself before this inspired rule, for the effectiveness and length of his authority and influence depends on how much he hates sin, especially his own.

Proverbs 16:13 Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.

Reader, your lips can promote you faster than anything else, including your heart and mind, though they are necessary (*Proverbs 22:11*)!

No matter how good and virtuous your heart and mind, they are revealed best by gracious and truthful speech. Kings were great and powerful in Solomon's time, but their approval and affection could be won with righteous words.

As a Proverb, you are to understand the kings under consideration are noble and righteous kings.

Profane and wicked kings have little regard for good things, including wise and virtuous speech.

Many kings were foolish enough to appoint court jesters and evil counselors! But even pagan kings could appreciate humble and wise words, as Pharaoh listening to Joseph and Nebuchadnezzar listening to Daniel (*Genesis 41:38-45; Daniel 1:18-21*).

Consider the force and the great instruction of this Proverb. It does not teach winning the favor of friends, family, neighbors, or colleagues. It teaches winning the approval and affection of monarchs! Kings had

enormous power, and wealth. They held the power of life and death. Their favor was a great blessing (*Proverbs 16:14-15; 19:12; 20:2*).

Daniel continued through the reigns of several Chaldean kings, a Median king, and into the reign of Cyrus the Persian (*Daniel 1:18-21; 5:29-31; 6:1-3, 28*)!

Consider the details of the Proverb. Godly kings delight in good speech: they love right words spoken at the right time (*Proverbs 10:20; 15:23; 16:24; 25:11*).

But not only do they delight in the good words, they also admire the men who speak those words! The good words and discreet speech please their minds; the speakers win their hearts (*Proverbs 12:14; 14:35; 24:26*).

Solomon had heard how his father, David, had won Jonathan by his speech (*Proverbs 22:11; 1Samuel 18:1-5*).

Reader, would kings admire you? Are your words appropriate, cheerful, compassionate, discreet, edifying, encouraging, few, gentle, gracious, helpful, kind, merciful, modest, prudent, righteous, sober, thankful, true, and wise? Or do you backbite, complain, criticize, talk foolishly, exaggerate, jest, lie, murmur, slander, swear, tattle, and whisper?

Promotion is as close as your mouth. Death and life are in the power of your tongue (*Proverbs 10:31; 12:18; 18:21*).

If you want kings to delight in your speech and admire you, then teach your mouth the wisdom from the Holy Spirit (*Proverbs 10:19; 15:28; 16:23; 17:27-28*).

God gave Jesus Christ the tongue of the learned (*Isaiah 50:4*).

Jesus Christ's Words were pure truth and gracious (*Psalms 45:2; Luke 4:22; Revelation 3:14*).

No man ever spoke like Jesus Christ (*John 7:46*)!

Proverbs 16:14 The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it.

Reader, we have no king, so we must imagine a little to grasp this Proverb. But when kings had absolute power, it was wise to appease their anger (*Ecclesiastes 8:2-5*).

We do have a government and other authorities, and the same wisdom applies. When a ruler or person in authority is angry with you, it is smart to appease their wrath and end it.

Consider Nebuchadnezzar as of the greatest of all kings (*Daniel 2:37-38*).

If he favored your cause, he could promote you and decree death for your enemies (*Daniel 3:28-30*).

If he didn't favor your cause, he could cut you in pieces and turn your house into a dunghill (*Daniel 2:5*).

We have never seen power like it. Such a king is a beautiful sight (*Proverbs 30:29-31*).

With such a king: you would learn to live respectfully and obediently. You would know that his favor was wonderful and his wrath horrible (*Proverbs 16:15; 19:12*).

You would know that getting such a king angry was as foolish as writing your death sentence (*Proverbs 20:2; Romans 13:4-5*).

Therefore, it is wise to deal with rulers by "pacifying," or appeasing, any anger they have against you.

Understand this simple Word. The Oxford English Dictionary reads, "*pacify*" to allay the anger, excitement, or agitation of (a person); to calm, quiet; to appease. And the Holy Spirit uses "*pacify*" this way, which is what we must consider (*1Corinthians 2:13*).

Everyone knows how a gift can allay, calm, quiet, or appease a person's anger (*Proverbs 21:14*).

And you can read about the anger of kings being pacified in *Esther 7:10* and *Ezekiel 16:63*.

The sister verse to this Proverb is found in *Ecclesiastes 10:4*, where Solomon gives the same advice in similar Words. He teaches, even If your offences are great, you can appease the spirit of the ruler, by staying in your place of submission and yielding to him.

You can appease and persuade a prince, and even break his bones, by holding your anger, using soft answers, and forbearing with him for a long time (*Proverbs 15:18; 15:1; 25:15*).

Wicked fools hate authority and fight government (*Proverbs 17:11; 24:21*).

The Lord damns these ignorant ones as rabid dogs needing to be destroyed (*2Peter 2:10-12; Jude 1:8-10*).

Is any authority figure in your life offended with you? Pacify them today.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest King in the universe. He is the King of kings. And His anger against enemies is greater than any earthly king. What is the warning of the Bible to those kings? They better serve and appease Him, lest He destroy them when His anger is raised even a little (*Psalms 2:12*). Kiss the Son reader! And put your trust in Him!

Proverbs 16:15 In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.

Winning Approval And Favor Of Rulers Is Wise.

Solomon was a great king, and he prepared the nation for his son to be king, so he used a monarch with absolute authority to teach the lesson (*Ecclesiastes 12:9*).

If such a king is angry, you are dead (*Proverbs 16:14; 20:8*).

If such a king is pleased with you, it is a great blessing, as the Proverb here describes (*Proverbs 19:12*).

A King's Countenance Is Appearance Demeanor Or Spirit.

A countenance with light, is favorable bearing or conduct, as the second clause shows. A king's wrath can bring a quick death sentence (*Proverbs 16:14*).

But his approval brings life instead and blessing like the latter rain, which comes just before harvest and finishes a crop with growth and moisture.

Unless stated otherwise, when Solomon wrote about kings, he described a righteous king properly using his power (*Proverbs 20:26; 25:5*).

Absolute authority is strange or intimidating today, because you have never seen such power, nor have you often seen civil power used righteously. A king with great authority is truly a beautiful sight (*Proverbs 30:29-31*).

Wise men pacify angry rulers (*Proverbs 16:14*). How? By being tolerant and patient and using gentle speech (*Proverbs 15:1; 25:15*).

Wise men choose to submit rather than confront (*Ecclesiastes 8:2-4; 10:4*).

Wise men win approval and favor of rulers by diligence, faithfulness, submission, and wisdom. Joseph, David, Esther, and Daniel were promoted this way (*Proverbs 14:35; 17:2; 22:11*).

The Proverb lesson applies to all authority, starting with the first relationship.

Wives are to reverence their husbands (*Ephesians 5:33; 1Peter 3:1-6*).

Children must obey and honor parents (*Ephesians 6:1-3; Leviticus 19:3; Deuteronomy 27:16*).

Employees are to honor employers (*1Timothy 6:1-2; Titus 2:9-10*).

Church members are to esteem pastors (*1Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1Corinthians 4:1; Hebrews 13:7, 17*).

God ordained authority by infinite wisdom, so disrespect of any sphere of it is rebellion against God Himself (*Romans 13:1-2; 1Peter 2:13-17; 1Samuel 8:7*).

God reserved some of the harshest language of the Bible for rebels (*2Peter 2:10-12; Jude 1:8-10*).

God reserved some of the harshest judgments for those rebels (*Numbers 5:11-31; 16:28-35; 2Kings 2:23-24*).

There is another King whose wrath or favor means much more. He is the King of kings, Jesus Christ the Lord. David said, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (*Psalms 2:12*).

You will soon stand before His throne, to give an account of your life (*Romans 14:10-12; 2Corinthians 5:9-11; Revelation 20:11-15*).

If you please Him, eternal pleasures, far better than a latter rain are waiting for you (*1Corinthians 2:9*)!

Proverbs 16:16 How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!

Reader, how important is money to you? How many hours a day do you work for it? How many days a week? How many much schooling completed for your job? How much energy do you expend?

What kind of difficulties do you put up with cheerfully? Would \$1,000,000 in your mailbox put a smile on your face? Do you fret about not having enough?

**Wisdom And Understanding
Are Most Important!
Get Your Priorities Right!**

Men work hard to obtain money, for money answers all things, it supplies necessities (*Proverbs 16:26; Ecclesiastes 10:12*).

Men attend school for many years; they undergo training after that; they put forth great effort; they endure enormous difficulties; they fret when there is not enough; they carefully devise to acquire more; they beg for God's assistance.

How Many Apply These Efforts

To Obtain Wisdom And Understanding?

So reader, what about you? Wisdom is the power of right judgment, ability to know the best course of action in any situation to please God and men.

Understanding is power of right discernment, ability to grasp the totality of factors in any matter to see the issue perfectly.

What glorious things! No wonder David told Solomon to get wisdom and understanding above all else (*Proverbs 4:5-9*)!

So when God offered Solomon any request, he chose these above all else (*1Kings 3:5-14*)!

So reader, your greatest goal in life, should be to grow in wisdom and understanding, to please God more perfectly and to profit all those in your sphere of activity. Nothing else can truly compare to this goal.

Most men apply their greatest planning, efforts, and time to the pursuit of money (gold and silver). But Solomon by this Proverb warns you that such are perverse priorities. Wisdom is greater than any amount of money!

If a poor man told you that wisdom was more important than money, it would be easy to dismiss his instruction, as an invalid comparison, from a man who had never known the power and benefits of wealth. But that is not the case in this Proverb!

Solomon had riches, glory, and honor exceeding any king before or after him. He knew all about money and its benefits. But he told you to rank wisdom and understanding much higher!

Though the Proverb begins with an interrogative, "How", there is no question! It is an exclamation! Note the punctuation! Without any stated limits, wisdom and understanding are infinitely better than gold and silver! There is no comparison!

Solomon emphatically told you a priority and rule for life, wisdom is far more important than money! Yet you are tempted every day to spend most or all of your energy and time in chasing money!

Did other rich men make this comparison and conclude the same? Indeed! Consider Solomon in other places (*Proverbs 3:15-18; 8:10-11, 19*).

Consider his father David (*Psalms 19:7-11; 119:14, 72, 127, 162*).

Consider Job (*Job 28:12-28*) and Moses (*Hebrews 11:24-26*).

**A Proverb Is Valuable
Only If You Apply It!**

You spend your life pursuing an inferior thing, namely money. Do you diligently pursue wisdom? Do you read your Bible daily? Do you study a Proverb and its interpretation? Do you carefully prepare, listen, and review preaching?

There are 1,440 minutes in every day. If you gave 1% for wisdom, you would spend 15 minutes reading and praying daily. If you gave 10%, that is 2 hours and 24 minutes.

Jesus Christ, the God of heaven and earth, knew and understood this Proverb. His kingdom, which is a reign of righteousness and wisdom described in the New Testament, is worth more than any treasure on earth.

Jesus described men selling all that they had in order to purchase the kingdom of heaven, for it is worth far more than anything on earth (*Matthew 13:44-46*). Does this describe you?

Proverbs 16:17 The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.

Are you on the right road reader? Do you have a good map to avoid wrong turns?

If you stay on the highway of the upright, you will save your life from much trouble! The Bible marks the highway well, but there are many large and enticing exits to get you lost. The winners in the race of life, the redeemed of the Lord, stay on the highway of the upright (*Isaiah 35:8-10*).

Solomon's Proverbs are a goldmine of metaphors! The highway of the upright is the lifestyle of wise and godly men (*Proverbs 2:20; 4:18; 12:28*).

The upright hate evil and avoid it as much as possible, like Job and David (*Proverbs 13:6; 15:24; Job 1:1; Psalm 101:1-8*).

The upright understand where they are going, and they resist any enticement to take a wrong turn (*Proverbs 4:14-15; 14:8*).

There is more than one road in life. There is the way of the wicked, which you must avoid with all fear (*Proverbs 1:15; 4:19; 15:9; 22:5*).

If you wander out of the highway of the upright, you will live a painful life in the congregation of the dead (*Proverbs 13:15; 21:16*).

Reader, you must carefully understand the road you choose each day (*Proverbs 4:25-27; 14:8; 19:16*).

Men will entice you to their way (*Proverbs 16:29; 28:10*).

Men will despise you for choosing the right way (*Proverbs 29:27*).

Your own heart will mislead you into the wrong way (*Proverbs 16:25; 21:2*).

Trust your road map of life, the Word of God (*Proverbs 3:5-6; 19:3; 21:29*)!

The farther you go on the highway of the upright, the clearer and easier the way (*Proverbs 4:18; 10:9*)!

Train your children in the good and right way (*Proverbs 22:6; 23:19*).

Then prepare to be an old man or woman in the right way (*Proverbs 16:31*).

The Christian life is a race, a long distance race, not a sprint. It is run with patience. It requires removing every weight, worldly distractions. It requires removing the sin that easily besets you. It is run patiently before many witnesses in heaven, while we look unto Jesus (*Hebrews 12:1-2*).

The road race of the Christian life is on the highway of the upright, the strait and narrow way outlined by Jesus Christ, (*Matthew 7:13-14*).

**Only A Few Men Find This Road
That Leads To Life!**

**The Abundant Life Now
And Eternal Life Later!**

The gate onto this highway is very strait, or restrictive; and the way is very narrow, not allowing for any deviations.

The Christian who runs his race well will receive a prize. The children of God should eagerly live temperate lives to win an eternal crown (*1Corinthians 9:24-27*).

The goal of pleasing Jesus Christ and obtaining His favor should cause a pressing drive toward the finish line (*Philippians 3:13-14*).

**The World Believes Pleasing Jesus
Is A Life Of Self-Denial
And That It Is!**

***Proverbs 16:18 Pride goeth before
destruction, and an haughty spirit before a
fall.***

**Pride!
A Force Stronger Than Gravity
Brings Men Down**

Solomon gave an axiom here that all men should memorize and consider every day. Getting arrogant or puffed up about anything is a sure way to end up flat on your face! Haughty or proud men are heading toward destruction, just as surely as nuts fall from the tree! Humble yourself today!

**Pride Is Poison
To The Heart! To The Soul! To The Mind!**

Pride hardens the heart from loving and forgiving others, so it corrodes relationships.

Pride cauterizes the soul against correction and warnings, so it leads to horrendous backslidings and falls.

Pride blinds the mind to dangers and risks, so a man rushes into foolish choices and destruction without ordinary caution.

Pride cost the devil his position in heaven (*1Timothy 3:6*).

Solomon observed pride bringing many men down. He often warned against pride (*Proverbs 11:2; 17:19; 18:12; 29:23*).

But his son Rehoboam missed the lesson. He arrogantly provoked Israel and lost ten of the twelve tribes at his coronation (*2Chronicles 10:1-19*)! His over confidence cost him the nation.

King Uzziah presumed to offer incense like a priest, but had to retire with facial leprosy!

Haman proudly tried to destroy the Jews, to his own shame and hanging!

Peter arrogantly presumed he would never deny the Lord, until the cock crowed a few hours later!

Herod haughtily enjoyed the praise of men, for the few hours, then the worms ate him from the inside out! *Acts 12:23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.*

It is easy to spot a proud man. He likes to talk, especially about himself or his opinions. He does not serve others voluntarily, for it is beneath him, he is too preoccupied with his own things.

A proud man moves in high circles, and he lives above his means. He rejects advice or warnings. He gets angry easily, criticizes others, and holds bitterness for past offences.

A proud man presumes on people, is disrespectful of authority, and flouts the breaking of laws. He always has an excuse for his bad actions, instead of a humble

apology. He makes commitments he cannot or will not keep.

A proud man speaks hastily. The problems in his life are always someone else's fault. He will not seek help. He rules only by tyranny.

What Are Cures For Pride? Confess your sins completely to God, and forsake them. Apologize to all you have wronged and make full restitution.

Humble yourself and obey all wise advice you have been given. Serve the lowest person you can find.

Talk less. Humility is not thinking or saying you are humble. Humility is obeying God and serving others.

Pride provokes Him to judgment; humility brings blessing. *"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1Peter 5:6).*

***Proverbs 16:19 Better it is to be of an
humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide
the spoil with the proud.***

Here is precious wisdom, **If** you can you grasp it? Will you obey it? God declared a priority for your life to give you joy, peace, and success!

Solomon, one of the greatest kings in history was used by the Holy Spirit to write these Words. It was easy for Solomon, after observing and experiencing every advantage his power and wealth could provide. It is better to humbly enjoy the friendship of poor and modest friends than to be rich and move in the circles of the arrogant.

**It Is Better To Be Poor And Humble
Than To Be Rich And Proud!**

So reader! Can you believe this? It is impossible for the world to even grasp the concept. The world-lings want you to believe that success and wealth justify arrogance, and associating with the movers and shakers of society is as good as it gets.

The world-lings are terribly wrong, and this error will come back to haunt them. Pride is evil enough to destroy any benefit, pleasure, or value in wealth.

Of course, you cannot explain this concept to a world-ling. They are too busy worshipping their own bellies (*Philippians 3:18-19*)!

The world-ling would never understand why Moses chose to leave all the pleasures and treasures of Egypt to suffer affliction with the poor people of God (*Hebrews 11:24-26*).

But with Holy Spirit as his friend, and the like precious faith of affectionate brethren, he enjoyed more than any Pharaoh could even imagine (*Exodus 6:2-3; 2Peter 1:1*).

Why is this priority true? Because pride brings contention and strife. And proud and rich friends will soon conspire to destroy you and take your assets (*Proverbs 13:10; 18:23; 1Timothy 6:17*).

Why is this priority true? Because the Lord loves and blesses the humble, but He opposes the proud. What man wants the Lord as his enemy! (*Proverbs 6:16-19; 1Peter 5:5-6*)

Why is this priority true? Because contentment is the key to happiness and success (*Ecclesiastes 5:10; 1Timothy 6:6; Hebrews 13:5-6*). The proud and the rich always want more than they have.

Why is this priority true? Because you never lose giving up things for Jesus Christ (*Mark 8:34-37; 10:28-30*).

The Only Way To Success With Your Life Is To Lose It For Him!

Why is this priority true? Because you cannot take riches with you, and the lowly that trust in God have untold riches waiting (*Matthew 6:19-21; 2Corinthians 4:17-18; 1Timothy 6:7*).

Do you believe the Words of Jesus Christ reader? Jesus said to seek His kingdom first in your life (*Matthew 6:33*)?

Have you found a band of lowly saints with whom you can share the riches of the Gospel and the hope of an eternal inheritance? It should be your priority reader!

Proverbs 16:20 He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy is he.

You will face decisions and dilemmas daily. Only two things are needed for success in each case, wisdom and faith.

Wisdom, the power of right judgment, will help you answer and solve each one justly and prudently. Every time you do this, natural and spiritual blessings will follow.

Faith, the confidence in God's blessings, will protect and prosper you, when you honor truth and righteousness over self-preservation and self-promotion.

Success and happiness are easy! They are offered here! How are they obtained? By godly wisdom in decisions

and faith in the God of wisdom (*Proverbs 3:5-6; Joshua 1:8; 1Timothy 6:6; 1Peter 3:10-12*)!

Dealing with life's perplexities by faith in God's Word and providence, you even secure the favor of others. And the peace and prosperity of prudent choices, and the blessing of God. What rewards!

You Need To Get Wisdom And Faith And Use Them!

Most men face decisions and dilemmas with selfish motives that pervert their judgment and cause them to make poor choices. Rather than trust God to bless a wise and righteous solution. Most men try to protect and prosper themselves by bending justice and equity. Does this compromise work? Never! It will come home to roost in the disapproval of others, the trouble of selfish choices, and punishment from God. Such men are in destruction mode!

Where is wisdom found to handle matters prudently and secure the favor of God and men? In the Scriptures, the inspired Word of God (*Psalms 19:7-11; 119:130; 2Timothy 3:15-17*)!

Especially, in the much practical wisdom, here in the book of Proverbs (*Proverbs 1:1-7; 2:1-9; 30:5-6*).

If you will immerse yourself in the Word of God, you will accumulate true wisdom to deal with life's difficulties, and you will accrue great blessings and joy to yourself.

David had great wisdom and favor with the people (*1Samuel 18:5, 14-16, 30*).

How? He valued the Word of God highly (*Psalms 1:1-3; 19:7-11; 119:1-176*)!

The Word of God, taught him how to deal with Saul's efforts to kill him, the sedition of his sons, the uniting of a divided nation, and the death of his child?

Why did David heed Abigail's correction? Nathan's denial? Nathan's rebuke? He could have acted selfishly many times, but he did not. He trusted God fully.

Joseph and Daniel, foreign captives in the courts of the greatest nations at the time, made choices according to God's Word.

Joseph resisted the advances of a beautiful woman and was falsely convicted of rape, but he basked in his pure conscience, the favor of his captors, and God took him to the top of Egypt.

Daniel resisted Nebuchadnezzar's pagan diet and Darius's religious decree to the peace of his soul, the respect of his captors, and God took him to the top of

Babylon and Persia. Reader, have you gotten the lesson of the Proverb yet?

God's inspired wisdom in His Word brings success and happiness. Consider it! It has:

- The infallible criterion for a wife (*Proverbs 31:30*),
- The means to pacify anger (*Proverbs 15:1*),
- The secret about generosity (*Proverbs 11:24-25*),
- The warning about scams (*Proverbs 12:11; 13:11*),
- The managerial wisdom (*Proverbs 29:21*),
- The danger of cosigning (*Proverbs 6:1-5*),
- The value of savings (*Proverbs 6:6-8*),
- The wisdom of capitalism (*Proverbs 14:4*),
- The child training rules (*Proverbs 29:15*), and
- The deceitful danger of alcohol (*Proverbs 20:1*).

The Word of God has warnings about:

- The whorish women (*Proverbs 6:25*),
- The value of hard work (*Proverbs 22:29*),
- The terrible curse of pride (*Proverbs 16:18*),
- The priorities of life (*Proverbs 15:16; 17:1*),
- The nature of true friendship (*Proverbs 17:17; 27:5-6*),
- The remedy for adultery (*Proverbs 5:19*),
- The value of counselors (*Proverbs 15:22*),
- The evil of sedition (*Proverbs 20:2; 24:21-22*),
- The danger of despising parents (*Proverbs 20:20; 30:17*),
- The wisdom of human society (*Proverbs 30:27*), and
- The care of the poor (*Proverbs 19:17*).

The lesson is two-fold:

1. Do not distort the Proverb and lose its value by missing either side.
2. Do you apply Bible wisdom diligently, and Do you trust God for success?

God expects you to use the wisdom He has given, for anything less, is tempting Him; but no amount of discernment or prudence alone will handle all matters, you must have God's supernatural favor and blessing (*Psalms 127:1-2; Matthew 4:5-7*).

A wise man distrusts his motives and doubts his abilities: He depends on God's blessing more than his own efforts.

A wise man knows he can do nothing without divine assistance. He casts himself on God's mercy and promises after choosing a wise course of action.

It is this combination that is true wisdom. Grasp it, and remember it!

Jacob wisely divided his company into two bands and sent generous gifts before meeting Esau, but he wrestled with God all night for success (*Genesis 32:3-32*).

David sent Hushai to divert Absalom from Ahithophel's wisdom, but he begged and trusted God for his success (*2Samuel 15:31-34*).

Esther held a double banquet for her husband, the king of Persia, but only after fasting three days and nights for its success (*Esther 4:15-17; 5:1-6*).

If wisdom is found in the Word of God, where is faith found? Always in the same place! *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (*Romans 10:17*).

Regular reading of God's dealings with and deliverances of His people will build faith in His providence (*Psalms 40:4-5; 46:1-11; 77:11-20; 78:1-8; 107:1-43; 111:1-10; 145:1-21; Romans 15:4*).

How do you handle life's dilemmas?

- By emotion?
- By instinct?
- By habit?
- By fear?
- By the example of parents?
- By looking out for yourself?
- By peer pressure?
- By popular opinion?
- By current trends?
- By pragmatic considerations?

These foolish bases, for decision making and actions, will fail! You missed the lesson of the Proverb, and you will miss the success and happiness that wisdom and faith could give you!

Wise Men Learn God's Word And Apply It Faithfully!

Wise men never fear valuing truth and righteousness over self-preservation and self-promotion.

Wise men know God's laws include, natural success, bring spiritual happiness, and secure God's blessing and protection.

Wise men never handle a matter any other way than what the Word of God indicates, and in this confidence they trust a faithful God for a full reward (*Psalms 119:22, 94, 117, 166, 173; Hebrews 11:6*).

Proverbs 16:21 The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.

Wisdom And Graciousness Combine For Great Effect!

Which of these two precious things do you lack? Or are you short of both? This Proverb presents great men and women, wise in heart that is clearly recognized by others. And a gracious speech to communicate the truth of this Proverb to them!

By these two means, you can nobly improve the lives around you to God's glory.

The Measure Of A Man's Life After Fearing God Is His Effect On Others!

The second commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself.

The grand goal, of life, is to be a tree of life and save men from sin and folly by excellent counsel (**Proverbs 11:30**).

Daniel compared such men to the bright stars of heaven (**Daniel 12:3**).

Only Fearing God, Leaves You Half A Success! The Ability To Counsel Others Completes The Truth!

The Proverb describes wisdom of the heart, for which others will call you prudent. Reader, note two things, this wisdom is in the heart, not the head; and the effect is prudence, not brilliance.

The wisdom here is not head knowledge, but the understanding of a discerning heart.

The result is prudence, which is practical wisdom for happy and successful living.

Though you have practical wisdom in your heart, you may not know, how to communicate it to gain the trust, win the interest, and change the minds of others.

There are men and women with discernment and prudence, who leave no mark on the world, because their abrupt, calloused, insensitive, and rude way of communicating turns others off.

This is a great waste, for the wisdom that could serve others, never gets to them.

How should wisdom be communicated? With gracious speech and sweet words!

Good teachers create good hearers; poor teachers make poor hearers. The sweetness of gracious speech causes others to listen intently to the lovely sound conveying the wisdom of life.

Thus, *"Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer" (Proverbs 24:26).*

And, *"A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it" (Proverbs 15:23)!*

A pure heart full of wisdom will generally lead to gracious lips, which even kings will desire to have as their friend (**Proverbs 22:11**).

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11).

This is the ultimate tree of life! For not only is there wisdom in the heart, but there is also grace in the lips to help others learn. *"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit" (Proverbs 15:4).*

Gracious speech is necessary to win hearers. *"Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones" (Proverbs 16:24).*

And, *"The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so" (Proverbs 15:7).*

Also, *"Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel" (Proverbs 27:9).*

To Increase The Learning Of Others You Must Acquire Practical Wisdom And Gracious Speech!

This Proverb is precious and valuable for ordinary men, but much more for God's ministers. They are stewards of the manifold wisdom of God (**Jeremiah 3:15; Matthew 13:52; 1Peter 4:10**).

If they are not apt to teach, they do not belong in the office (**1Timothy 3:2; 2Timothy 2:24-26**).

Of all men, God's ministers must teach, God's wisdom with gracious and sound speech (**Titus 2:7-8**).

Kings knew that Joseph, Moses, and Daniel had both, wisdom of heart and sweet lips (**Genesis 41:37-45; Acts 7:22; Daniel 1:17-21; 5:11; 6:1-5**).

Yet Jesus of Nazareth had all the treasures of wisdom and the most gracious lips of all! Hearers could not believe the combination (**Psalms 45:2; Luke 4:22; 24:32; John 7:46; Colossians 2:3**)!

No wonder Mary could not leave him to help her sister prepare for a meal (**Luke 10:38-42**).

Make all four (Joseph, Moses, Daniel, Mary) your models! Learn wisdom from the Word of God, and let your speech be always with grace (**Psalms 19:7; 119:130; Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6**).

Be a tree of life to those God brings across your path in your family, church, job, etc. The King of kings will be your friend!

Proverbs 16:22 Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.

**Life Is A School Of Nature And Human History
But The Word Of God Furnishes Its Lessons!**

These lessons have two great interpreters: Wisdom and Folly.

Wisdom and Folly are interpreters that get opposite meanings out of the same facts, and these meanings exert a direct opposite influence upon the experience, character, and destiny of human souls.

The most beneficial interpretation of life: "*Understanding is a wellspring of life.*"

Understanding here means correct view of true knowledge, and especially true knowledge concerning the highest truths.

What are the highest truths? Truths relating to God as manifested in Jesus Christ. These truths touch all that is vital in man's history, these truths touch all that is grand in the universe, and glorious in God. So speaks, the only absolutely perfect Teacher the world has ever had or ever will have. This knowledge is a wellspring of life.

The wellspring leads to, "*This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.*" (**John 17:3**).

Two things are necessary to the opening and the flow of wellsprings, beneath the earth's surface, and risings above it. ¹There must be deep veins and high mountains. The mountains draw the snow and the rain from heaven, the rents receive, retain, and give forth the supply. ²There must be corresponding heights and depths in the life of a man. Either he is charged as a well spring with wisdom from above, thinking upwards to God or thinking downward to himself, the exercise of his soul.

This comes of spiritual understanding, which is indeed a "*well spring.*" Ever flowing and refreshing are the powers of the soul. "*Whosoever drinketh of the water that I give him shall never thirst,*" said Christ. "*It shall be to him as a well of water springing up to everlasting life.*" (**John 4:14**).

The happiness of a worldly man, such as it is, is from without: his happiness streams in through his senses, yielding in its flow pleasurable but only temporary sensations.

**Happiness Of A Spiritually Enlightened Man
Is From Within: It Is A Fountain, Not A Pool,**

As the humblest spring of water in the obscure vale has a connection with the boundless ocean that lies behind the hills, perhaps a thousand miles away, so the joy of a good man flows into him from the Infinite source. And as water ever presses upwards to its level, so the happiness of a lowly soul ever presses upward to a participation in the unbounded blessedness of God.

The pernicious ^{harmful} interpretation of life: "*The instruction of fools is folly.*" In all ages fools have set themselves up as interpreters.

In a spiritual sense many of the most illustrious sages of the olden time were fools. And today a few of the learned persons, literary intelligentsia, and false Bible teachers of our day are fools as well.

They misinterpret the great facts of life. They explain away the divine importance and give it a false application. Nothing but folly is worlds philosophies, this worlds sciences, and this world's religions.

The typical teacher's instruction today is ever "*folly.*" "There is nothing," said sensible and sententious ^{full of meaning} Matthew Henry, "that is good to be gotten by a fool. Even his instruction, his acts, his solemn discourses, are but folly."

The instruction of fools is to make others like himself. When he does his best it is but folly in comparison even with the common talk of a wise man, who speaks better at the dinner table than a fool in Moses's seat."

Folly is pernicious ^{very harmful}: it brings ruin into every department in which it plays a prominent part; whether it is business, politics, or religion. **Matthew 15:14** *Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.*

Proverbs 16:23 The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

Wise men cannot hide their wisdom: it is obvious by their speech.

Wise men do not waste their wisdom: they teach their mouths and lips how to behave.

A man's words and manner of speaking say more about his wisdom or folly than any other thing.

A fools word's cannot hide his stupidity, for his words reveal him clearly and quickly (**Ecclesiastes 10:12-13**).

Reader, do you desire to be great in the sight of God and men?

Success here, requires a good and honest heart, where all the issues of life begin (**Proverbs 4:23; Matthew 12:34-35; 15:16-20**).

With the noble, the pure, and the wise intentions of the heart, the combined affect will soon teach and transform the rest of the person, especially the speech.

Because words are so obvious to others and carry such an impact for good or evil, proper speech is a primary concern of a person seeking to be great.

Reader, are you a tree of life? *"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit"* (**Proverbs 15:4**).

God gave you a tongue for more than passing food down your throat. He gave you a tongue to glorify Him and to deify, comfort and help others, which is why He calls the tongue your *"glory"* (**Psalms 30:12; 108:1; Colossians 3:16**).

How well do you use it? Your tongue can do great good or harm, and God and men will reward you accordingly (**Proverbs 18:21**).

Excellent words are a very beautiful thing that men love (**Proverbs 15:23; 24:26; 25:11**).

Reader, do you limit your words? A wise man knows the danger of much speaking (**Proverbs 10:19**).

A wise man knows even a fool appears wise, when he is silent (**Proverbs 17:27-28**). Silence is golden.

Reader, are you slow to speak? God gave you two ears and one mouth, so be quick to hear and slow to speak (**James 1:19**).

Hasty speech will make you worse than a fool (**Proverbs 29:20**).

Reader, do you study before speaking? Blurting out thoughts or talking in the heat of emotion is foolish. You should hear the whole matter and study before speaking (**Proverbs 15:28; 18:13**).

Reader, are you a lover of graciousness? A wise man's words are gracious, because they flow from a pure heart, which speech even kings desire and favor (**Proverbs 22:11; Ecclesiastes 10:12; Colossians 4:6**).

Reader, do you teach others? When you speak, you should communicate certain Words of truth (**Proverbs 22:17-21; 1Peter 3:15**).

Your goal should be, to edify others and build them up (**Proverbs 16:24; Ephesians 4:29**).

Reader, are you a good comforter? Do not make merry around those cast down (**Proverbs 25:20**).

Reader, comfort the feeble-minded (**1Thessalonians 5:14**)?

Reader, do not cause misery like Job's friends (**Job 16:2**)?

Reader, do you hate foolish talking and jesting? God detest the inane cackling of fools, and He will judge those for such a waste of speech (**Ecclesiastes 7:1-6; Ephesians 5:3-5**).

Reader, are you guardian of the reputations of other men? Hate backbiting, slander, talebearing, and whispering (**Proverbs 6:16-19**).

Reader, don't do these sins yourself, and don't accommodate them in others (**Proverbs 25:23**).

In Order To Have Good Speech You Must First Cleanse The Heart Which Is The Source Of Your Words.

If you do not make the heart good, your words will never be good. Confess your foolish and evil thoughts to God, and pray that God to help you guard your lips (**Psalms 19:14; 139:23-24; 141:3; Isaiah 6:5**).

Then you need to fill your heart with the pure Words of Scripture to have beautiful and helpful things to say (**Proverbs 22:17-21; Psalms 37:30; 119:46, 172**).

Proverbs 16:24 Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

Kind And Gracious Words Are A Dessert For Any Occasion.

Pleasant Words go into our ears and souls with sweet pleasure, and they enliven our hearts and even our steps. Our faces glow by their instant effect, and energy and vitality are quickly restored to those cast down. We can create such words out of thin air by our lips, when wisdom is guiding our speech (**Proverbs 16:23**).

Reader, do your words promote health? Do you heal others by kind encouragement, wise counsel, and gentle comfort? Or are your words like a piercing sword (**Proverbs 12:18**)?

Reader, do you leave others bleeding with caustic, critical, calloused, and condemning words? Do you then pour in salt, when we are told to only lightly season our speech with it (**Colossians 4:6**)?

Good perfume rejoices the heart in just nanoseconds; and kind words do the same, when a friend gives sweet counsel from his heart (*Proverbs 27:9*).

Oh the precious gift of speech! The right words at the right time are beautiful indeed (*Proverbs 15:23*). See the comments on *Proverbs 25:11*.

There is great power in your tongue, (*Proverbs 18:21*). So reader, how will you use it?

In our industrial and synthetic society, many do not know the sweetness or health properties of the honeycomb. When did you last eat some? To the informed, God's honeybees pollinate plants and also produce a sweet delight with fascinating nutrients.

Honey is a luxurious food God created for our benefit (*Proverbs 24:13*).

God described Canaan, the wonderful land of promise, as a land flowing with milk and honey (*Exodus 3:8; Deuteronomy 8:7-9*).

The manna God gave Israel for forty years tasted like wafers made with honey (*Exodus 16:31*).

Kings sent honey as gifts (*2Samuel 17:27-29; 1Kings 14:3*).

Honey enlightened the eyes of Prince Jonathan (*1Samuel 14:27*).

John the Baptist lived on it and locusts (*Matthew 3:4*); Jesus ate it with butter, two important foods of Israel, in His formative years (*Isaiah 7:15*).

And Jesus ate honey again after his resurrection (*Luke 24:42*).

The inspired lovers, in Solomon's Song used it to describe the sweetness of their lovemaking (*Song of Solomon 4:11; 5:1*).

No one will deny that honey is sweet. It is twice as sweet as sugar! In recipes calling for sugar, only one-half the amount of honey is needed. A full person will reject it (*Proverbs 27:7*)!

But did you know these facts? Honeycomb contains four foods: honey, bee pollen, bee propolis, and royal jelly.

Honey itself has a long history of use for many different ailments in many nations. Ever used local honey to combat allergies? And there are dozens more of therapeutic uses.

Bee pollen, which collects on the bees' legs, is sometimes described as the perfect food. With 96 nutrients, it is rich in zinc, calcium, magnesium, and iron. It can energize you, give you a sense of well

being, increase your intellectual capacity, and close any nutritional gaps in your diet.

Propolis, a waxy resin the bees use for several purposes, is rich in B vitamins, minerals, and bioflavonoids. It has no equal as a natural antibiotic. It stimulates the thymus gland to produce white blood cells to fight or eliminate viruses, poisons, and waste products.

Royal jelly, secreted by a few nurse bees in each hive, is the exclusive food of the queen bee. This wonder food causes her to live forty times as long as the worker bees and produce double her bodyweight in eggs each day, though genetically identical to them! It contains a high concentration of pantothenic acid and many other complex nutrients.

Since God said honey was healthful and commended it in the places mentioned above, we believe it (*Proverbs 14:23; 16:24*).

It is a pleasure to read research confirming the Holy Spirit's Words from 3000 years ago! The Creator reveals true science.

Honey is precious. It is sweet to our taste, enlivens our eyes, energizes our bodies, and has many nutritional properties for overall health.

Our words should be the same! They should cause others to rejoice and be glad they heard us speak, and they should edify and build others up in profitable ways (*Ephesians 4:29*).

Choose Good Words To Say To Someone Today!

Such speech fulfills our Proverb. Our speech should always be gracious, with only a pinch of salt (*Colossians 4:6; Ecclesiastes 10:12*).

Wise mothers say to children, **If** you can't say anything kind, then don't say anything at all. Our stinger words should only be used as a last resort, just like the honeybee. Parents love to hear right words (*Proverbs 23:16; 15:26*).

But is sweet speech manly? Yes, indeed! God created man and inspired our Proverb, and Solomon the son of David wrote them.

Were they effeminate? David demonstrated his bravery, when he killed Goliath and he won Jonathan's heart by his gracious words, all in one day (*Proverbs 22:11; 1Samuel 18:1*)!

Our Lord could confound the Pharisees when needed, but His disciples knew Him for gracious and healthful speech (*Psalms 45:2; Isaiah 50:4*).

Our Lord's gracious Words at Nazareth caused the whole crowd to wonder (*Luke 4:22*).

And the hearts of two disciples burned joyfully from Our Lord's precious Words on the road to Emmaus (*Luke 24:32*).

Unnecessary harshness in speech is not a sign of manliness or the Spirit of God; it is sold by the devil to those whose hearts are not right.

Unnecessary harshness in speech, flows from a heart hardened by hatred and pride, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (*Matthew 12:34*).

David rebuked his nephews for being too hard (*2Samuel 3:39*). Jesus did the same to James and John (*Luke 9:55*). Neither party had the spirit or tongue of our Lord.

A bitter and biting tongue is a fire from hell; it is a world of iniquity; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison (*James 3:2-12*).

No man can tame the tongue by himself. Yet we must do all we can remove, a bitter and biting tongue, out from our own mouths and those of our children, by the grace of God.

Men like John the Baptist and Elijah had special missions, and we do not know **if** they were so harsh in private. They likely were not. They are not examples for common speech.

We should rather choose the law of kindness to govern our choice of words (*Proverbs 31:26*).

Who can deny that God's Words are sweet? Are they not sweeter than honey (*Psalms 19:10; 119:103*)? Do God's Words, not cause joy and rejoicing in our hearts (*Jeremiah 15:16*)?

God's Words are so sweet that we describe those speaking them as having beautiful feet (*Romans 10:15*)!

Can you remember the sweetness to your soul of hearing the true gospel with understanding?

There is great power in the tongue, (*Proverbs 18:21*).

Reader, how will you use it today? You will eat the fruit of how you use it, life or death! Every man shall bear his own burden!

Proverbs 16:25 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Every man thinks his way is right, because it feels and seems right. But God warns that such thinking leads to death.

Of course, most men are too in love with their own opinions to change, even **if** the Bible condemns their thoughts to be sin and self-destructive.

There is only one criterion for truth and wisdom, and that is, the will of God, revealed in the Word of God.

No doubt you have strong opinions of how life should be lived and things done.

No doubt you have thoughts that seem so right, that came from parents, teachers, friends, religion, habits, culture, various media, experiences, and most of all, your deceitful heart and wicked imagination (*Genesis 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9*).

Sources Apart From Divine Truth All Lead To Multiple Ways Of Death.

The first clause describes one way of one man. This is a man's personal opinion about a particular matter.

He is confident his opinion is good and right, because he came up with the idea and has enormous bias to justify himself and defend his thinking.

The second clause describes the end, or result, of the way of one man to bring forth, the multiple ways of death.

There are many ways of death known to men, and each man's own arrogant thinking is able to get him there easily and surely.

Because every man is very vulnerable to arrogant thinking and errors, the Holy Spirit repeated this Proverb, to emphasize the value of its lesson (*Proverbs 14:12*).

The Holy Spirit also included several Proverbs with different wording for a similar lesson (*Proverbs 12:15; 16:2; 21:2; 28:26*).

The Holy Spirit knows that man would foolishly think their ideas are noble and wise.

A wise man learns not to trust his own thinking and to seek God's will on every matter (*Proverbs 3:5-6*).

A wise man then avoids the seductive ways of the world that lead to death (*Proverbs 12:26; Psalm 1:1-6*).

A wise man humbly confesses his ignorance, prays for God to search his heart and thoughts, and judges every opinion in light of clear Bible doctrine (*Proverbs 30:2-3; Psalms 139:23-24; 119:128*).

Self-Deception Is Blinding And Damning!

Self-deception leads you to destruction. But your difficulty is detecting, you have lied to yourself, because you are in love with your own thoughts (**Proverbs 18:2; 26:12, 16**).

No one can give reasons to persuade you, because their ideas are inferior to yours. And once you commit yourself to a course of action, you are too proud to admit any error (**Psalms 36:2**).

Popular thinking on matters of truth and wisdom is always wrong. The majority is in love with themselves and each other, but God considers their most noble thoughts, to be an abomination (**Luke 16:15**).

God plainly declared that most men take the wide gate and broad way to destruction; only a few take the strait gate and narrow way to life (**Matthew 7:13-14**).

God knows the thoughts of men are vanity, worthless (**Psalms 94:11**).

Reader, you should think the same way of thoughts, whether your own or another man's (**Psalms 119:113**).

King Saul of Israel had an idea, and it seemed right! Instead of slaughtering and wasting all the good animals of the Amalekites, he would allow the people to keep them for an offering to God. But God had already stated they were to be slaughtered! So Samuel the prophet condemned Saul's thinking as witchcraft and idolatry (**1Samuel 15:1-35**).

Saul of Tarsus thought with himself to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth (**Proverbs 26:9**).

Notice that he thought with himself, which is the warning of this Proverb, because he had no internal check on false thoughts.

You need an outside opinion that is perfectly right to correct your thinking, and God's will, that is in the Word of God, is perfect (**Psalms 119:128; Isaiah 8:20**)!

So reader, the Word of God, is a fabulous gift from God to His children, for it contains the true wisdom of the infinitely wise God.

Reader, you can correct all your evil and foolish thinking by learning what the Bible teaches on every subject. The Word of God, is able to make the man of God perfect (**2Timothy 3:16-17**).

The Word of God can lead you through any difficulty (**Psalms 119:105**). It is pure truth and wisdom.

So reader, after using the Bible as your first standard for right thinking, your next safeguard is to consult wise and successful men. There is safety from your vain ideas in a multitude of good counselors (**Proverbs 11:14; 12:15; 15:22**).

But only a few men are humble and wise enough to subject their ideas and opinions to the examination and criticism of others.

Reader, men have ideas that seem right to add to God's Word. These ideas make their worship vain (**Matthew 15:7-9**).

It does not matter if the ideas are conservative or liberal, or how romantic the concept. Paul condemned anything outside God's Word, because God rejects all additions (**Romans 14:1-6; Colossians 2:16-23**).

The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, not the better idea from any creative Christian (**Romans 14:17-18**)!

Where are the great men of God, who will accept nothing but what is clearly laid out in Holy Scripture?

Where are the men who will accept only the old paths of the faith once delivered to the saints (**Jeremiah 6:16; Jude 1:3**)?

Where are the men who listen closely for correction from the Spirit through His Word, "*This is the way, walk ye in it*" (**Isaiah 30:21**)?

Where are the men who will reject and crush all efforts to add to God's Word?

Do you think you have the way to heaven figured out? Does your church seem right, because it is beautiful, large, or growing?

There is only one way to heaven, and it is through the Lord Jesus Christ apart from any man, priest, pope, or system. He said, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me*" (**John 14:6**).

Proverbs 16:26 He that laboureth laboureth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him.

A life sentence of hard labor was Adam's curse for listening to his wife rather than God (**Genesis 3:17-19**).

Instead of leisurely dressing a garden and enjoying a great variety of easy food, men must scratch in the ground to survive.

But whether a man knows about Eden or not, there is a powerful necessity that drives him to hard labor: he must work or starve.

This Proverb Teaches Wisdom If You Will Muse Upon It.

Men work hard by a selfish necessity, for themselves. **If** they do not work, they will starve.

This is man's condition in the world, whether he wears a white or blue collar, he must labor to eat!

If a man does not work, he will not eat; the fear of hunger forces him to work every day (*Ecclesiastes 6:7*).

A perverse society, resents this wonderful motive for labor. Children are given everything, for doing nothing. They say, "Let him be a child; there will be plenty of time for work later," meaning he should play all day.

A perverse society legislates welfare, which mysteriously multiplies those needing handouts. Others provide meals for men too lazy to work.

A government could quickly reduce welfare entitlements, increase national productivity, and raise tax revenues, by simply punishing any harboring or feeding of lazy men!

Here is the cure for sluggards, no work, no food! Solomon knew laziness was a common problem in young men (*Proverbs 6:6-11; 10:26; 12:27; 13:4; 15:19; 19:24; 21:25; 22:13; 24:30-34; 26:13-15*).

It is difficult to teach or force foolish young men to work hard. But just a few days without food will produce a laborer! Which the Holy Spirit endorsed (*2Thessalonians 3:8-12*)!

Here is the profit motive in Scripture! Communism hallucinates, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need." And it fails every time!

A man will never apply himself diligently for such an idiotic theory that gives the lazy as much as the diligent, but he will apply himself for a proportionate reward!

Let a man see the endless possibilities in a capitalistic system, and he will gladly do his job well and look for extra work! Socialism also turns men into sheep.

Reader, the wisdom here can be enhanced or leveraged! Give a man a loving wife and dependent children, and he will work even harder.

Two are better than one, because they have an even greater reward for their labor, among other benefits (*Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*).

How Does A Boy Become A Man? Right Training!

Son, are you using this Proverb with your children? Eating is not a right, except for helpless infants. Even young children can do chores.

Most parents have an open-refrigerator policy, which fosters laziness and self-indulgence that leads to an undisciplined life. When most grew up on farms, this

lesson was generally practiced, for everyone had to help with the chores in order to eat.

Christianity teaches a great work ethic! Shame on Christians who are slothful at work! Whatever you find to do, do it with your might (*Ecclesiastes 9:10; Colossians 3:23*).

Diligent labor at your own business is part of sanctification for a believer (*1Thessalonians 4:11-12*).

Those disliking hard work are to be starved into enjoying it (*Proverbs 20:4; 2Thessalonians 3:8-12*).

This Proverb also rebukes greed and covetousness. The ambitious man, obsessed with the reward of hard work, forgets he will die and leave his wealth to another (*Ecclesiastes 2:17-24; Luke 12:16-21*).

The ambitious man heaps up riches, not knowing who will spend them (*Psalms 39:6*).

Therefore, wisdom and true success, are learning godly contentment with the essentials, not seeking wealth (*Proverbs 12:9; 1Timothy 6:6-10*).

Convenient food is the wise choice (*Proverbs 30:7-9*).

Pastor, do you labor diligently in your holy calling? The Lord Jesus Christ chose you to endure hardness as a good soldier (*2Timothy 2:3-4*).

Paul worked night and day to be the greatest apostle he could be (*1Corinthians 15:10; 1Thessalonians 2:9*).

Does your soul crave laboring in order to hear your Lord say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant"? Let Paul's inspired example and instruction invigorate your soul, for the kingdom of God (*1Corinthians 9:16; 1Timothy 4:13-16*).

Reader, does your soul crave God and His Word? It never will without God's sovereign grace. Have you checked your hunger and thirst for righteousness (*Matthew 5:6*)?

Does this righteous hunger drive you to separate yourself from the foolish, worldly pursuits to learn wisdom (*Proverbs 18:1*)?

You must stimulate your appetite for the sincere milk of the Word (*1Peter 2:1-3*).

Jesus met a great crowd, five thousand men plus women and children, who wanted to make him king, so He could fill their bellies with free bread and fish (*John 6:15, 26*).

He told them to labor rather for the food that endures unto eternal life (*John 6:27*).

Are you laboring for yourself in this crucial matter? This is labor with a fantastic reward!

Reader, how much does your soul crave the kingdom of heaven? Jesus described it as a man finding a treasure in a field and joyfully selling all that he had in order to buy the field for its treasure (*Matthew 13:44*).

You should pray, "Lord, increase the craving of my soul for Thee and the things of Thy kingdom, and direct my labor fervently toward them. Amen."

Proverbs 16:27 An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire.

Wicked people love the sins of others. They dig for them; they look for them; they listen for them. They are drawn to them like sharks or hyenas to blood.

Wicked people rejoice when someone falls. They hunt for sins; they eavesdrop on conversations; they snoop. They recall ancient sins.

Wicked people are always backbiting, slandering, talebearing, or whispering. These sons of Belial justify the fires of hell, which is a fitting punishment for their crime.

Investigative reporting of today, hunts for the sins of as many as possible, especially those in authority. They dig up evil, buy betrayals, and blackmail witnesses. They pervert facts, twist motives, stalk victims, and reward tattlers. Why? To feed the insatiable appetite of a generation of self-righteous leeches!

The desire to backbite, tattle, whisper, and slander are overpowering urges. The fire burns in their lips: they must repeat sins to others (*Psalms 39:1-3*).

They rejoice to expose another's faults. They have no conscience. They delight to destroy the reputations and peace of others.

They are brute beasts with perverse hearts. The blackness of their souls is matched only by the blackness of their eternity (*2Peter 2:17; Jude 1:13*).

Envy and self-righteousness control these devils. They live in constant envy, for they resent the superiority of others. They can only justify their existence by destroying others.

They think themselves righteous, when they can let out the secret sins of another, though their hearts have more wickedness than any of their victims. Solomon warned often about wicked talkers (*Proverbs 6:12-19; 12:18; 16:28; 17:9; 18:8; 26:20-22*).

So did other Bible writers (*Psalms 52:2-4; 57:4; Romans 1:29-30; 2Corinthians 12:20; 1Timothy 6:3-5*).

Isaiah ripped those that made a man an offender for a word or a thing of nothing (*Isaiah 29:20-21*).

James called the tongue a world of iniquity set on fire of hell (*James 3:6*).

The sons of belial see David's adultery and ignore 60 years of wisdom, character, and love of God. Saints have loved David for 3000 years in spite of his sins, because they were exceptions.

It is brute beasts that see Peter's denial of Jesus and ignore the Lord's forgiveness of Peter. Jesus promoted him over the other apostles!

If you observe someone trying to ruin another's reputation, you have found an ungodly man. Shut his mouth with righteous anger or reject him from your company (*Proverbs 25:23; Psalms 101:1-8*).

God hates this wickedness, and so should you (*Proverbs 6:12-19; Psalms 15:1-5; Psalms 15:4; 139:19-22*).

Make sure you diligently seek to protect the reputations of others at all times.

Proverbs 16:28 A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.

Reader, stop talking negatively about others! **If** you cannot say something good or edifying, then do not say anything!

Only perverse and profane persons gossip and backbite. You should abhor the thought of committing rape or murder, but slander or talebearing is both!

Slander and talebearing violates a person's reputation, which is worse than violating his body.

Gossiping destroys families, churches, businesses, and friends. A froward man is evil, obnoxious, and unreasonable.

A froward man loves to cause division by spreading rumors, innuendos, secrets, or lies about others. **If** you hate these sins, you are in good company, because God hates them as well (*Proverbs 6:16-19*)!

God rends these wicked talkers in both testaments (*Proverbs 10:18; 11:13; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20-26; Psalms 50:20-22; 101:5; Leviticus 19:16; Romans 1:29-30; 2Corinthians 12:20*).

What you call gossip, the Bible calls backbiting, evil surmising, talebearing, tattling, and whispering.

These similar terms describe the sin of revealing or spreading secrets in order to agitate, despise, divide, harm, or undermine another.

Slander is the spreading of false information in order to defame.

These sins cause strife and trouble, and they divide close friends by telling private facts, forgiven sins, or outright lies about one or both friends.

Reader, do not ever use words to harm another person unless clearly necessary (*1Corinthians 1:11*).

If you know of a person's sin, hide it from others, cover it, rather than expose it, in order to promote love (*Proverbs 11:13; Proverbs 17:9*).

If you have a problem with someone, either overlook it or take care of it with him alone (*Proverbs 10:12; 19:11; 25:9-10; Matthew 18:15*).

If you do not fear and hate gossip, remember that God considers harmful words as murder (*Matthew 5:21-22*).

If you perceive a man badmouthing another, stop the violence by an angry response. You would use any means to stop a rape or murder, and this crime is worse, so respond to this verbal wickedness as well. (*Proverbs 25:23*)!

If you allow and listen to their divisive and perverse insinuations, you are guilty with them as well (*Proverbs 17:4*).

If you clearly identify such a wicked person, keep away from him, because he will only bring you trouble (*Proverbs 26:20-28*).

Godly men never harm others by divisive words. This is the most godly, peaceful, and successful way to live. (*Psalms 15:3*).

If actions are suspicious, a godly man will believe and hope all things about that person to avoid thinking evil of them (*1Corinthians 13:4-7*).

By choosing to be a peacemaker, you are a true child of God (*Matthew 5:9; James 3:17-18*).

Purify your heart and let it produce gracious words at all times to win the favor even of kings (*Proverbs 22:11; Colossians 4:6*).

Proverbs 16:29 A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good.

The verses (*Proverbs 16:27-29*) represent a mischievous man, a man who makes it the business of his life, to injure society. He is designated here by three terms:

1. "Ungodly" (*Proverbs 16:27*) in the original, as in the margin, a man of Belial;
2. "Froward," (*Proverbs 16:28*) perverse and refractory ^{stubborn};
3. "Violent," here in verse *Proverbs 16:29*; fierce, cruel, and bloody. Such is a mischievous man.

Throughout all the social circles of the world this man is found.

His delight, is to snap the links of friendship, to sow the seeds of strife in the fields of affection. Thus, quarrels are music to his soul.

A violent man propagates evil:

- *A violent man soweth strife, (Proverbs 16:28).*
- *A violent man "separateth chief friends," (Proverbs 16:28)*
- *A violent man "enticeth his neighbour," (Proverbs 16:29)*
- *A violent man "bringeth evil to pass." (Proverbs 16:30)*

There are three ways in which the ungodly does this:

1. The ungodly produceth social strife by insinuations. "*A whisperer separateth chief friends.*" He whispereth. The whisper is his mode of speech, and for his purpose it is mightier than the loudest passion. It gives the hearer to understand that there is something so terrible, that words cannot communicate them properly.
2. The ungodly leads astray by enticements. "*A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good.*" He uses the winning and seductive speech to carry out his mischievous designs. Thus he turns his neighbor into the wrong course.
3. The ungodly pursues his designs by deliberation. "*He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things.*" (*Proverbs 16:30*). A man shuts his eyes when he wishes to think without distraction.

The ungodly can easily be compared to what false teachers do. They are grievous wolves, not sparing the flock, and who by good words and fair speeches deceive the heart of the simple.

As the man of sin (antichrist), deceives with his miracles and sorceries, showing them that dwell on the earth; and leads them into the way that is not good.

As those ungodly seducers at Ephesus "*draw disciples after them,*" compelling them by their persuasions to embrace distorted doctrines, such as cause, convulsions of conscience. (*Acts 20:30*).

As Jeroboam did the house of Israel "*thrust men out of God's ways*"; (**Deuteronomy 13:5**).

As cunning persecutors did in the primitive times, prevailing as much by their tongues, as by their terrifying saws (**Hebrews 11:37** "*they were sawn asunder, were tempted*").

But "*though they speak fair, believe them not; for there are seven abominations in their hearts.*" (**Proverbs 26:25**)

The ungodly man works as hard at doing something evil and setting men against each other as the laborer does to earn a living.

The ungodly causes strife and separates friends.

Hoary heads are crowns of glory on righteous men; compare **Proverbs 16:26-31** with **Proverbs 12:26; 17:9; 20:29** and **Leviticus 19:32**.

The righteous man's conquest and self-control within accomplishes more than physical prowess without; compare **Proverbs 16:32** with **14:29; 15:18; 19:11**.

God, is in control of what happens; **Proverbs 16:33** with verses **1-4, 9; 19:21; 20:24; Psalm 37:23-24**.

Proverbs 16:30 He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.

He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things, or "perverse" or "contrary things." He shuts his eyes, so his thoughts might not be disturbed and distracted by visible objects, but might be more free and more easily to compose evil.

The ungodly man is intent upon the wicked things he is meditating and devising.

The ungodly man shuts his eyes against light of Scripture evidence, which he does not care to dwell upon unless his principles and practices should be reproved.

The ungodly man shuts his eyes, and will not look into the Word of God, that he may form and devise, evil schemes of doctrine and worship contrary to them. Or he winks with his eyes, as in (**Proverbs 6:13**).

The ungodly man gives the wink and nod, that came out of his meditation, to his companions, when the proper time was to circumvent an innocent person, and to begin the evil plan he had devised.

So do false teachers. Ungodly preachers in deep thought, set about their evil designs and contrivances, act deceitfully. Such individuals try not to speak clearly

out their mouth. They mutter out their words and handle the Word of God deceitfully. They commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, as a faithful minister does; and by artful methods brings his evil designs to pass.

Adam Clark: *He shutteth his eyes to devise*, etc., He meditates deeply upon ways and means to commit sin. He shuts his eyes that he may shut out all other ideas, that his whole soul may be in this.

Faussett: Shutting the eyes is the sign of profound meditation, the mind being drawn off from external objects to internal meditation.

Instead of meditating on spiritual things, he meditates on sinful things, planning on how to accomplish the evil of his heart until he has thought it out, then he gives the command to his subordinates and associates to accomplish it.

This describes the total depravity of all men by nature, and only the restraints imposed by society, circumstances and the restraining grace of God, keep many from going to these lengths. A good description of such a man is that given in (**Genesis 6:5**).

Jonathan Edwards: These expressions intimate the secret, subtle, sly, deceitful way of his injuring his neighbor.

"He shuts his eyes," that is, he conceals his aim and design, as though he did not see or aim at the mischief that will follow, acts as if he were asleep and thought no harm, had no part in the evil that befalls his neighbor than if he were all the while asleep.

"*Moving his lips.*" i.e. he whispers. He puts his ill designs in practice in a very secret manner.

He shutteth his eyes, denoting deep thought (**Psalm 64:6**).

Moving his lips, or, "biting his lips"-a determined purpose (**Proverbs 6:13**).

Psalms 64:1-6 *Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.*

2 *Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:*

3 *Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words:*

4 *That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.*

5 *They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?*

6 *They search out iniquities; they accomplish*

a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.

Proverbs 6:12-15 *A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth.*

13 *He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers;*

14 *Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord.*

15 *Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.*

Proverbs 16:31 *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.*

"Respect your elders" is an American expression for this important Bible commandment.

We are to show special honor to those who are old. God said it this way: *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD. Leviticus 19:32*

A hoary head is gray or white hair, where age has replaced the hair color of youth with gray or white (*Isaiah 46:4*).

Hoary is anything white or gray. And such hair color on old men is considered a beautiful thing. (*Job 38:29; 41:32*)

The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the gray head. Proverbs 20:29

Both Old Men And Women Should Be Respected.

This is God's ordinance. An ungodly and wicked generation, like our present one, despises old people (*Isaiah 3:5; Lamentations 5:12*).

Though age may reduce a mother's abilities, she is still to be honored (*Proverbs 23:22*).

Even the New Testament commands that older men and women be respected (*1 Timothy 5:1-2*).

Gray or white hair on an old person should be a badge of honor, a crown of glory!

Age should mean great wisdom, holiness, love of Christ, and Christian example. But this is not always the case, so the Holy Spirit limits the Proverb to those who have these things.

Elihu deferred to Job's three friends, for they were older than he was. But they did not speak wisely, so he had to silence them with his opinion (*Job 32:1-14*).

And Elihu concludes that older men are not always wise or sound in judgment. Their hoary heads were not in the way of righteousness for 29 chapters of foolish reasoning (*Job 3:31*)!

Solomon compared an old, rich king who is foolish with a young, poor child who is wise. And he concludes the wise child is better than the foolish old man. (*Ecclesiastes 4:13*).

But his own foolish son was worse for rejecting the advice of wise old men (*1 Kings 12:6-16*).

All old men have lived long, but have they used time for holy purposes. Old men should know more truth, exercise more wisdom, practice more holiness, and be more spiritually minded. After all, they are closer to heaven and have had more time for perfection.

Consider that a church may only support widows who lived our Proverb (*1 Timothy 5:3-16*).

Honor was given to Jacob, Samuel, Elisha, and Jehoiada. These men lived in the way of righteousness. (*Genesis 47:1-12; 1 Samuel 25:1; 2 Kings 13:14; 2 Chronicles 24:15-16*).

Old men should be teachers (*Hebrews 5:12-14*).

Old men should be examples of sobriety, gravity, temperance, faith, charity, and patience (*Titus 2:1-2*).

Many years of life is no blessing, **If** lived in sin; for such a man is under God's curse (*Isaiah 65:20*).

There is no sight more pitiful than an old man nearing death, who has nothing to show of spiritual value for his years!

Dear old man, have you earned the glory belonging to your age? Are you an example to all? Are you the glory of your children and grandchildren (*Proverbs 17:6*)?

Are you a pillar in the temple of your God (*Psalms 92:12-15*)?

There Is No Time Like The Present To Seek These Goals!

Can we name a more glorious old couple than Zacharias and Elisabeth (*Luke 1:5-7*)? They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless! What silver crowns they wore of time-honored hair!

Simeon was an old man, whose ambition was to see the Christ rather than make a million (*Luke 2:25-35*).

The old widow Anna gave herself to the Lord in holy and sober worship (*Luke 2:36-38*).

Paul, near death, did not count his assets but rather described his faithful life (*2Timothy 4:6-8*).

Paul's aged head had been in the way of righteousness (*Philemon 1:9*).

Every father should prepare now to be one of the great fathers in Israel, by training His children in the fear of the Lord (*Ephesians 6:4; Psalms 71:18; 78:1-8; Joel 1:2-3*).

Every child and grandchild is an opportunity for you to build your progeny in the kingdom of God! And they will honor your gray head as a crown of glory for the investment in their souls!

Our Lord Jesus Christ in His glorified appearance has head and hairs white like wool, as white as snow (*Revelation 1:14*).

It is definitely a crown of glory to Him, for He is the Ancient of Days and Everlasting Father, though He is absolutely ageless (*Revelation 1:18*)!

Proverbs 16:32 He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

Every real man wants to be a mighty man of valor. Every real woman wants to be a noble woman worthy of such a man.

The Word of God records many exploits of mighty men and noble women. But this Proverb teaches a greater measure of individual glory, the ability to defer anger and control your spirit!

The man who can resist getting angry or losing control of his spirit is more honorable than men with great military accomplishments.

Consider some mighty men of valor:

Gideon defeated a army of Midianites with only 300 men.

Jephthah destroyed 20 Ammonites cities with a small army.

Samson killed 1000 Philistines with the jawbone of an ass.

Shamgar killed 600 with an ox goad.

Joab took the fortress of Jebus, which became Jerusalem.

Adino killed 800 at one time with his spear.

Abishai did the same to 300.

Caleb begged for a mountain in Canaan where the giants lived, and he destroyed them and took their cities.

But you can be greater than these men! You do so by being cautious and slow in getting angry and by controlling and ruling your spirit.

It takes more courage, discipline, strength, and wisdom to resist passionate emotions like anger than to take a city.

Reader, can you control the violent feelings of anger and keep your spirit calm and wise? Will you? This is how a born fool can be wise and glorious (*Proverbs 14:29; Ecclesiastes 7:9; James 1:19-20*)!

If you defer your anger and pass over the faults and offences of others, you are glorious (*Proverbs 19:11*)!

But your spirit screams for vengeance! It hates to be restrained. It must exert itself, in full fury, now! Harsh words burn in your tongue and must be spoken.

You cannot help your problem, you tell others. The world lies to you that a violent temper is the trait of mighty men, the right of free men, and the tool of strong leaders.

Venting Of Rage Brings Relief Only To A Depraved Brute Soul

If a conscience remains, you are soon grieved at the violence that spewed out of your mouth with the fury of a devil's hell.

Rather than ruling their spirit, most men are ruled by their spirits. Instead of conquering anger, they become captives of their passions.

The battle exceeds any military expedition of any war. A city can be taken with a single siege, but you will fight the passion of anger for the rest of your life. Wars are fought by the efforts of many, but you must fight alone.

The vigilance, effort, and patience needed to rule anger causes most men to forfeit the battle and become slaves to their folly, **If** they even considered rage something to resist.

The world is filled with illustrations of those who could not rule their spirits. You have them in your own family. You likely have one in your own closet.

Alexander the Great conquered the known world, but he could not defeat the brutish beast within that ruined him at home and among his friends.

Peter the Great is reported to have said, "I can govern my people, but how can I govern myself?"

If you can defeat this monster, you will have a victory over a foe that has destroyed conquerors. You will be a mighty man!

Anger marks a loser! Guaranteed! Anger blinds your mind to misread situations, causes you to say and do stupid things, never accomplishes anything good, and drives away your friends (**Proverbs 14:17; 15:18; 21:24; 22:24-25; 29:22**).

If you get angry and do not rule your spirit, you cannot be compared to a great military hero; you must be compared to a city with its walls broken down and vulnerable to every kind of evil (**Proverbs 25:28; James 3:14-16**).

Not all anger is sin. Do not let effeminate heretics tell you otherwise. Jesus condemned unjustified anger and Paul said to be angry and sin not. (**Matthew 5:22; Ephesians 4:26**).

Anger is good, when it is directed against sin for the glory of God. But anger in a traffic jam, or over spilt milk, or about another's harsh words against you, or because you were slighted, or in retaliation for a wrong, or because things did not turn out as expected, are wrong!

There Are More Passions Than Just Anger And You Must Rule Them As Well!

Moodiness is the mark of an immature child, not a mighty man of valor. Such a person needs a spanking, not comforting.

Murmuring, is the complaining of a wicked heart, moving a devilish tongue, which ought not to be.

Critical or harsh speech is the poison that spews from an angry heart. Great men have pure hearts that result in gracious speech (**Proverbs 22:11; Colossians 4:6**).

What can you do to be great in the sight of God and men? Slow down! Do not ever say or do anything by impulse. Hear things out before you speak.

Choose to study every matter before giving your opinion. Wait before reacting, when you hear or experience any negative event.

Cut your words in half. Always be gracious in your speech, especially with your family. Let the Words of this Proverb motivate you to be a mighty man of valor.

But you cannot achieve this victory without help, and that help is in the Lord, His Word, and His saints.

Paul learned that he could do all things through Christ, Who strengthened him (**Philippians 4:13**).

The Holy Spirit, allowed to bear fruit by a holy and submissive life, can fill you with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, and so forth (**Galatians 5:22-23**).

The Word of God can convert your soul by showing the folly of anger and the glory of peace.

Will the real mighty men of valor please stand up! Will the real noble women of the earth please stand up!

You will not have to wait long to face your foe. The Lord Himself will arrange circumstances to test the rule of your spirit.

Do not be surprised by anything that happens. Purpose now to be slow and cautious in responding and to rule that unruly fury in your belly and tongue. May the grace of Jesus Christ give you complete victory!

***Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap;
but the whole disposing thereof is of the
LORD.***

What a coincidence! Aren't you lucky? That was a real fluke!

I'll use a random number generator to make sure it is entirely by chance! Such expressions are common from those who do not know, understand, or believe the sovereignty and providence of the LORD.

The God of the Bible, is the God also of chance. He governs even the lot, which was used to select one person from a group.

For example, we flip a coin at football games to find which team will receive the ball first. Or we draw straws to pick one student for a task.

What appears chance or coincidental, is only from our perspective. God is LORD of chance!

Pagan mariners were greatly afraid of a storm, they cast lots and found the trouble to be with Jonah (**Jonah 1:1-10**).

By lot, Saul wanted to know who had sinned, he narrowed the nation down to Jonathan (**1Samuel 14:36-46**).

By lot Joshua narrowed the nation down to Achan (**Joshua 7:10-19**).

By lot Israel chose where they would live by lot (**Nehemiah 11:1**).

By lot the apostles chose Matthias to replace Judas (**Acts 1:26**). He is LORD of chance!

When King Ahab disguised himself in battle to avoid being killed according to the Word of Micaiah, an arrow shot at a venture not only hit a man, but hit Ahab. It not only hit Ahab, it found a crack in his armor; and it

not only found a crack in his armor, but it gave him a fatal wound!

When Ruth purposed to glean fields to support her mother-in-law Naomi and herself, it was her hap to pick the field of Boaz, a rich man needing a wife, who married her; and they together were in the lineage of David and our Lord (***Ruth 2:3***).

The Bible speaks of time and chance happening to men (***Ecclesiastes 9:11***).

It is only from our perspective; for Jehovah is LORD of all time and chance.

It is vain to think that wisdom, strength, speed, or skill will always work, for the Lord arranges time and chance to make differences in spite of these ordinary means. We do not neglect these means, but we do not trust in them either.

We make our plans as soberly as we can, by God's rules of wisdom, and then we trust them to His blessing (***Proverbs 16:9; 19:21; 20:24; James 4:13-15***).

Not even a sparrow falls from heaven without our Lord's providential care and government, and you are of much more value than many sparrows (***Matthew 10:29-31***).

How much do you trust your Lord and Savior to take care of your life and needs today? Will you recognize those "chance" and "fluke" events of your life to be by His disposal?

From sparrows flying or falling to our Lord's detailed crucifixion, it is all according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of our sovereign God (***Acts 2:23; 4:28; 15:28***).